Byzantine Carved Gemstones: Their Typology, Dating, Materiality, and Function

Byzantine Carved Gemstones: Their Typology, Dating, Materiality, and Function

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This dissertation examines gemstones carved in relief from the middle and late Byzantine periods. Byzantine gems share a similar aesthetic with relief carvings in ivory and steatite, but they have not been as thoroughly studied. This dissertation seeks to address the lacuna in scholarship by assembling, dating, and analyzing two hundred Byzantine gems. Carved gemstones average less than four centimeters in height. Bloodstone, a variety of jasper, was carved the most frequently. Almost all are *enkolpia*, or pectoral pendants. The earliest pieces can be dated to the tenth through the early eleventh centuries. They are skillfully carved, and some display imperial themes such as the standing Christ and a symbol that is reminiscent of the *globus cruciger*. Some display iconographic and stylistic similarities with icons in ivory, which are also associated with emperors. The greatest number of pieces date to the twelfth century, and their quality varies considerably. This seems to suggest that initially gemstone *enkolpia* were owned by emperors and other elites, but that by the twelfth century they had become more accessible and their use increased. This finding is consistent with our knowledge of the cultural climate and religious practices of the twelfth century, which is characterized by a taste for luxury objects and a form of piety that was focused upon attaining individual salvation.

The function of gemstone *enkolpia* was explored through iconographic and textual analysis, as well as a through the study of their materiality. It was found that all of the gems are carved with religious subject matter and that most display portrait images of holy figures who were known as intercessors and protectors. This suggests that gemstone *enkolpia* were primarily

used to mediate a devotional relationship with a patron saint. Textual sources indicate that wearing an *enkolpion* "over the heart" was an act of devotion that ensured that the saint's presence was carried at all times. An examination of the materiality of gems revealed that their meanings and associations were brought to bear upon the devotional function of gemstone *enkolpia* in a variety of complex ways. It was also found that gemstone *enkolpia* had an amuletic nature and could be used for healing, protection, and divination.

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Introduction

This dissertation focuses on gemstones carved in relief from the middle and late Byzantine periods. As miniature relief sculptures wrought in precious materials, Byzantine gems have a place alongside the famous icons of ivory and steatite for which the middle Byzantine period is especially known. Although Byzantine carved gemstones are small, among them are some that are true masterpieces of Byzantine art. To name a few we may point to the bloodstone that belonged to Emperor Leo VI in the Victoria and Albert Museum, in which the soft folds of Christ's garments artfully mask the true hardness of the material, the lapis lazuli plaque in the Kremlin, in which a statuesque image of Christ emerges majestically from deep blue stone, and the large sapphire in Dumbarton Oaks, in which an ethereal Christ is carved with technical perfection from the hard, semi-translucent stone (nos. 22, 105).[1]

Byzantine carved gemstones display images of holy figures or, less frequently, Christian narrative scenes. They may therefore be considered "icons," although most were small works that were worn on the body as pectoral pendants, or *enkolpia*. There are also some larger plaques that could not have been worn, such as the lapis lazuli icon with the image of Christ in the Kremlin and the serpentine roundel with the image of the Virgin in the Victoria and Albert Museum (nos. 22, 41).[2] Liturgical objects were also carved in relief from semi-precious stone, but these are not included in the dissertation because their function differs significantly from the

[1] A. V. Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii v sobraniiakh SSSR: Katalog vystavki,* vol. 2 (Moscow: Sov. khudozhnik, 1977), 122, no. 635; Kirin Asen, James Nelson Carder, and Robert S. Nelson, *Sacred Art, Secular Context: Objects of Art from the Byzantine Collection of Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C.* (Athens, GA: Georgia Musuem of Art, 2005), 59, no. 3.

[2] Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 122, no. 635; David Buckton, ed., *Byzantium: Treasures of Byzantine Art and Culture in British Collections* (London: British Museum Press, 1994), 158, no. 171.

gems that were carved for use as personal devotional objects.[3] Byzantine gems carved in intaglio are also excluded because very few were produced after Iconoclasm. The dates between 843 C.E. and 1453 C.E. have been chosen as the chronological limits of this study because gems carved within this period share a typology that differs from that of early Byzantine gems in terms of carving technique, iconography, and function.

Byzantine art is widely perceived as an art of splendid ornament and dazzling precious materials, and as such one would expect the carved gemstones of Byzantium to have already been thoroughly studied. Ironically they have not, and this dissertation sets out to fill this lacuna in scholarship. Present conditions are, in fact, ideal for a serious study of Byzantine carved gems. Fundamental publications by Hans Wentzel and Alisa Bank from the 1960s and 1970s have established the typology of Byzantine gems, catalogued many examples, and provided a dating method.[4] Many carved gems from collections around the world have now been published and their recent publication history alongside ivories and steatites has given them a higher status as works of luxury art.

More importantly, the present time is ideal for a new study because unlike with steatites and ivories, there is no corpus of Byzantine carved gems and many art-historical questions remain unasked. Although the original goal of the present study was to compile the full corpus, the challenge was too great for the scope of this dissertation. The list of Byzantine carved gems presented here, however, is the most comprehensive ever published, and this study represents the

[3] There are several Byzantine patens and chalices cut from semi-precious stone in the treasury of San Marco. See David Buckton, ed., *The Treasury of San Marco, Venice* (Milan: Olivetti, 1984), 129-140, nos. 10 and 11 and 169-170, no. 18.

[4] Hans Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," in *Festschrift Friedrich Winkler*, ed. Hans Möhle (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1959), 9-21; A.V. Bank, *Prikladnoe iskusstvo Vizantii IX - XII vv Očerki* (Moscow: Glav. red. vostochnoi lit-ry, 1978), 115-146.

first effort to examine all Byzantine carved gems together.[5] Identifying, locating, dating, and organizing the gems were the greatest challenges of this study, and the results have laid the groundwork upon which a corpus can later be built.

The analysis of these assembled Byzantine gemstones has yielded insights that would be impossible to know without such a comprehensive view. For example, it is now possible to assert with certainty that jasper was the stone most frequently selected for Byzantine gem carving and that carved gem production peaked in the twelfth century and then declined in the late Byzantine period. Of even greater interest for art historians, this study also enables a thorough iconographic analysis of carved gemstones. It is now possible to determine the relative popularity of different themes and to see how they changed over time. One interesting outcome of this method of analysis is the unexpected discovery of popularity of an Old Testament figure, the prophet Daniel, who appears more in frequently on carved gems than on any other type of Byzantine devotional art. The reasons for Daniel's frequent appearance on Byzantine gems are explained in Chapter Eight.

The study of Byzantine gems is also relevant to current conversations within art-historical discourse. Most immediately, Byzantine gems are ideal works of art through which to explore the topic of materiality. The study of materiality has occupied scholars for more than a decade in many disciplines including archeology, anthropology, and art history.[6] Byzantine art has proven to be especially rich, literally, for the study of materiality. Already in 1985 Ioli Kalavrezou

[5] There is also an unpublished dissertation completed in 2014 on the topic of Byzantine gems by Dr. James Magruder at Johns Hopkins University. Since this dissertation is unpublished I am not aware of its scope or research methods, but it is possible that Magruder also analyzed all gems together.

[6] Tim Ingold, "Materials Against Materiality," *Archaeological Dialogues* 14.1 (2007): 1-16; multiple articles written from a sociological perspective can be found in Paul Graves-Brown, ed., *Matter, Materiality, and Modern Culture* (New York: Routledge 2000).

demonstrated that the Byzantines, in metaphorically linking the color and physical properties of green steatite to the attributes of the Virgin, appreciated the materiality of steatite icons.[7] In his study on the materiality of medieval marble floors, published in 2007, Fabio Berry argued that marble held multiple layers of symbolic meaning that was linked to the color, texture, and appearance of its reflective and veined surface.[8] Most recently Bissera Pentcheva has published research on the sensual aspects that precious materials bring to holy objects and their effects upon the pious viewer.[9] By exploring various cultural and religious contexts in which luxurious materials held meaning, these studies lay a foundation upon which the study of the materiality of Byzantine gemstones can be built.

The materiality of Byzantine gemstones is important because ancient and medieval sources reveal that beliefs regarding the agency, potency, and meaning of semi-precious stones were deeply rooted in society. From the lapidaries of the natural sciences to the allegories of the theologians, gemstones are described in a variety of contexts that indicate that the material itself was highly important. Through these sources we can explore the ways in which religious, cultural, and magical conceptions of gemstones come to bear upon gemstone *enkolpia*, as well as the extent to which they overlap, contradict, and reinforce each other. The reasons that gemstones were selected for carving will be investigated, keeping in mind that availability and affordability must have been significant factors. The question of whether certain holy figures

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[7] Ioli Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite* (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1985), 79-85.

[8] Fabio Barry, "Walking on Water: Cosmic Floors in Antiquity and the Middle Ages," *Art Bulletin* 89, no. 4 (2007): 627-656.

[9] Bissera Pentcheva, "The Performative Icon," *Art Bulletin* 88.4 (2006): 631-655 and Bissera Pentcheva, *The Sensual Icon: Space, Ritual, and the Senses in Byzantium* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010), passim.

were associated with particular types of gems will also be explored. Finally, it will be asked how the material properties of gemstones supported the function of gemstone *enkolpia* as devotional objects.

The study of Byzantine carved gems will also contribute to our knowledge of Byzantine material culture. Scholarly interest in material culture has coincided with the related study of materiality, yet studies of material culture are less theoretical and demonstrate in a very tangible way the function of objects in the daily life of past societies.[10] Byzantine gems were personal possessions that were worn on the body. By studying who owned them, how they were used, and the way that their owners felt about them, we gain a glimpse into their private life. Even simply handling Byzantine gems recreates certain aspects of the experience that their owners must have had hundreds of years ago. The feel of the weight, texture, and temperature of a gemstone is a reminder that those who used them as *enkolpia* would have felt their presence as they wore them. Their snug and comforting feel in the palm of the hand bring to mind the seemingly universal human attraction towards smooth pebbles and the desire to hold and handle them as "worry stones" or to simply collect them as found treasures of nature.

Understanding the basic questions of who owned Byzantine carved gems and how they were used leads directly towards the study of their role in Byzantine devotion. The role of art in devotion is an especially intriguing and rich area of study in Byzantine art history. Religion

[10] Maria Parani, "On the Personal Life of Objects in Byzantium," in *The Material and the Ideal: Essays in Medieval Art and Archaeology in Honour of Jean-Michel Spieser*, eds. Anthony Cutler and Arietta Papaconstantinou (Boston: Brill, 2007), 157-156; Maria Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images: Byzantine Material Culture and Religious Iconography (11th-15th centuries)* (Leiden: Brill, 2003); Eunice Dauterman Maguire, Henry Maguire, and Maggie J. Duncan-Flowers, *Art and Holy Powers in the Early Christian House* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989); Gary Vikan "Art and Marriage in Early Byzantium," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 44 (1990): 145-163; Gary Vikan, "Art, Medicine and Magic in Early Byzantium," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 38 (1984): 65-86; Gary Vikan and John Nesbitt, *Security in Byzantium: Locking, Sealing, and Weighing* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, 1980).

drove Byzantine image theory, and many of the finest masterpieces of Byzantine art have a religious function. As such, we must ask how Byzantine gems relate to religious practices, especially those that concern private devotion.[11] Byzantine gems were private "icons," and in this respect were similar to private icons in other media such as ivory and steatite. As relief icons, all share some of the same iconographic themes as well as some aspects of carving style and technique. With the exception of some of the larger plaques, however, Byzantine gems were not used in quite the same way as the larger relief icons. In terms of their typology, they are, in fact, related to cross-shaped phylacteries.[12] Carved gems and cross-shaped phylacteries bear different imagery, largely because they are shaped differently and because cross-shaped phylacteries lent themselves to Crucifixion themes almost by definition. Both, however, were worn on the body as pectorals, "over the heart." Because they could be worn on the body, both lent themselves to a type of piety that was extremely personal in nature.

In a related manner, when worn on the body Byzantine *enkolpia* and cross-shaped phylacteries were also considered protective. Any object that has protective agency of its own immediately bears some relationship to magic, which is currently a topic of interest in Byzantine

[11] For a theoretical discussion of the development of Byzantine image theory and devotional practices, see Charles Barber, *Figure and Likeness: On the Limits of Representation in Byzantine Iconoclasm* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), 13-38. On changes in Byzantine devotional practices over the late eleventh and twelfth centuries see A. P. Kazhdan and Annabel Jane Wharton, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 86-97. For a discussion of Byzantine devotional images in public spaces, see Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: a History of the Image before the Era of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 225-260.

[12] Anna Kartsonis, "Protection Against All Evil: Function, Use, and Operation of Byzantine Historiated Phylacteries," *Byzantinische Forschungen* 20 (1994): 73-102; Brigitte Pitarakis, *Les croix-reliquaires pectorales byzantines en bronze* (Paris: Picard, 2006).

scholarship.[13] The concept of Byzantine magic contradicts long-held notions of Byzantium as a strictly Christian society. In a culture that defined the legitimacy of Christian images, battled heresy, and encouraged public piety, it seems inconceivable that the magical beliefs and practices that had long existed in Mediterranean cultures could survive. Recent scholarship, however, has proven that it did and that it was practiced not only by the uneducated populace, but also by the privileged members of the imperial court. In a related manner, studies have also demonstrated that the use of holy images and objects frequently involved aspects of both magical and religious practices.[14] Byzantine carved gems exemplify the dual nature of many religious objects, as they functioned primarily as devotional objects, but also have clear affinities with amulets. Their study therefore enhances our understanding of the nuanced relationship between magic and religion in Byzantium.

The aforementioned discussion has outlined the goals of this dissertation. It is also important to identify some key areas of research that fall outside of the scope of this study, but which remain interesting and important topics to examine in the future. One is the in-depth technical study of Byzantine carved gems. Although I have examined and handled many of the gems in this study, I was unable to study them under a microscope. I was therefore unable to see the microscopic traces that would allow me to make more precise comments upon the carving techniques, such as the shape of the drills used to form particular curves and incisions. I have in mind Genevra Kornbluth's impressive study on Carolingian intaglios, in which, through a microscopic examination of carving incisions, she found that Carolingian carvers used wheel

[13] Henry Maguire, *Byzantine Magic* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1995); Paul Magdalino, and Maria V. Mavroudi*, The Occult Sciences in Byzantium* (Geneva: La Pomme d'or, 2006).

[14] Henry Maguire, "Magic and the Christian Image" in Maguire, *Byzantine Magic*, 51-72 and Alexander Kazhdan, "Holy and Unholy Miracle Workers" in Maguire, *Byzantine Magic*, 73-82.

drills with curved sides. This allowed her to differentiate the carving techniques of the Carolingians from those of the Byzantines who, according to her study, used wheel drills with flat sides.[15] It would be interesting to examine Byzantine gems from the eleventh and twelfth centuries under the microscope to see if wheel drills with curved sides were ever adopted, as this would provide clear indication of a transmission of carving techniques from the West to the East.

To follow the same theme of cross-cultural exchange, the reception of Byzantine carved gems in the medieval West is another topic that this dissertation does not address. The reception of Byzantine art in the West has been studied from multiple angles in recent years, including the ways in which Westerners appropriated Byzantine religious artworks and modified or incorporated them into their own objects.[16] Scholars have also explored the concept of *spolia* as it relates to the setting of classical gems into Western reliquaries.[17] It would be interesting to examine the processes through which Byzantine gems were integrated into their new contexts in the West. Some were set into religious objects, but others seem to have retained their original function as *enkolpia* or may have been simply tucked away for safekeeping. Most intriguing is

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[15] Genevra Kornbluth, *Engraved Gems of the Carolingian Empire* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), 11-13.

[16] For example, Holger Klein demonstrated that Byzantine cross reliquaries were reused and modified in the West to accommodate different devotional practices. See Holger A. Klein, *Byzanz, der Westen und das 'wahre' Kreuz: die Geschichte einer Reliquie und ihrer künstlerischen Fassung in Byzanz und im Abendland* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2004), 234-276.

[17] Dale Kinney, "Ancient Gems in the Middle Ages: Riches and Ready-mades," in *Reuse Value: Spolia and Appropriation in Art and Architecture from Constantine to Sherrie Levine,* eds. Richard Brilliant and Dale Kinney (Surrey: Ashgate, 2011), 97-120; Gemma Sena Chiesa, "Myth Revisited: The Re-Use of Mythological Cameos and Intaglios in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages," in *'Gems of Heaven': Recent Research on Engraved Gemstones in Late Antiquity c. AD 200 – 600*, eds. Chris Entwistle and Noël Adams (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 2011), 229-236; Genevra Kornbluth, "Roman Intaglios Oddly Set: The Transformative Power of the Metalwork Mount," in Entwistle and Adams, *Gems of Heaven,* 248-254; Brigitte Buettner, "From Bones to Stones: Reflections on Jeweled Reliquaries," in *Reliquiare im Mittelalter*, ed. Bruno Reudenbach and Gia Toussaint (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2005), 43-60. Buettner speaks more generally about the symbolic significance of gems, old and new, and argues that there is a likeness between stones and relics.

the frequency with which Byzantine gems are set into coronation regalia. Byzantine gems are set into crowns and other ceremonial coronation objects in France, Prague, and Stockholm.[18] This indicates that Byzantine carved gems were highly valued and respected in the medieval West, undoubtedly in part because they were associated with what was once the most powerful Christian empire in the world. The Christian subject matter of Byzantine carved gems must have also inspired their placement on coronation regalia.

It is my hope that the materials put forth in this dissertation will supply the foundation and resources necessary so that further studies on Byzantine carved gems can be more easily undertaken.

[18] In Prague, Byzantine gems are set into the "Crown of St. Wencelas" and in a coronation reliquary cross, both of which are in Prague Castle. In France, a sapphire carved with an image of St. John the Baptist is set into the Crown of Napoleon. In Stockholm, the object was first a royal crown, but when the Byzantine gem was added it was re-worked as a reliquary crown. On the Byzantine gems in Prague and Stockholm, see Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 17-18; On the sapphire with the image of St. John the Baptist in the Crown of Napoleon in the Louvre, see André Guillou and Jannic Durand, *Byzance et les images: cycle de conférences organisé au musée du Louvre par le Service culturel du 5 octobre au 7 décembre 1992* (Paris: La Documentation française, 1994), 287, no. 202.

Chapter One: Historiography

Byzantine carved gemstones have not been studied as thoroughly as the icons in ivory and steatite to which they are closely related. They failed to attract the attention of early art historians because of their small size and because they were categorized as "cameos" in most early publications, a term that is associated with jewelry. Jewelry was traditionally categorized under the minor arts, and as such carved gems held a minor place in the foundational scholarship of Byzantine art history. In a discipline where architecture and monumental painting held the highest positions of the hierarchy, tiny "icons" that fit into the palm of the hand were of secondary importance. As tomes and corpuses were written on church architecture, manuscript illumination, panel icons, and ivories, carved gemstones were rarely mentioned in the scholarship of the nineteenth through the first half of the twentieth centuries. In fact, they appear in only two contexts in early art historical literature. The first is in catalogues, in which Byzantine gems were pictured and described in brief entries alongside other works that were considered minor arts.[1] In the second, more elevated context, imperial gems were showcased alongside more important works of Byzantine art.[2] Their imperial inscriptions, which are rarely

[1] Ernest Babelon, *Catalogue des camées antiques et modernes de la Bibliothèque Nationale* (Paris: Leroux, 1897), 178-186; Wladimir de Grüneisen, *Art Chrétien primitif du haut et du bas moyehage* (Paris: Vente a la vieille Russie, 1930), 81-82; Wladimir de Grüneisen, *Collection de Grüneisen. Catalogue raisonné* (Paris: J. Schemit, 1930), 81-85; Marvin Ross, *Metalworks, Ceramics, Glass, Glyptics, Painting,* vol. 1, *Catalogue of the Byzantine and Early Mediaeval Antiquities in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1962), 93-101. Although Byzantine gems that date to the period after Iconoclasm are not included in the catalogues of Gustav Schlumberger, he did publish the image of one, the bloodstone of Christ in the Cabinet des Médailles (Inv. no. Babelon 333), along with other works of Byzantine art, as illustrations to his historical text on Nikephoros Phocas. See Gustav Léon Schlumberger, *Un empereur byzantin au dixième siècle, Nicéphore Phocas* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1890), 155.

[2] Charles Diehl, *Manuel d'art byzantin,* vol. 2 (Paris: A. Picard, 1926), 673; John Beckwith, *The Art of Constantinople: an Introduction to Byzantine Art, 330-1453* (New York: Phaidon Publishers, 1961), 81, no. 102.

found on Byzantine artworks in any media, increased their importance and allowed for their inclusion amongst the masterpieces.

It is not only their small size that caused Byzantine gems to be overlooked in the early scholarship. The study of Byzantine gems is also complicated because of the ways that they were categorized, which can be illustrated by the diverse contexts in which they have been collected, stored, and published. There was and remains a lack of agreement regarding the typology of Byzantine carved gems, and they have been classified in many different ways alongside jewelry, relief sculpture, decorative arts, reliquaries, and even coins and medals. For example, Byzantine gems are proudly displayed in permanent exhibitions of Byzantine art in the Louvre, Dumbarton Oaks, and the Metropolitan Museum. In these contexts, exhibited with icons in ivory and steatite, enameled reliquaries, and liturgical objects, they are classified as Byzantine religious artworks in a luxurious aesthetic. At the same time, Byzantine gems are also tucked away in coin cabinets at the Staatlichen Münzsammlung in Munich and at the Cabinet des Médailles in Paris, the result of being collected and categorized amongst medals, coins, and seals.

The lack of agreement over the typology of Byzantine carved gemstones originates in part from the way in which they have been collected since the time of their production until the early modern period. Unlike sculpture, architecture, and painted icons, which had a more public life, Byzantine gems were small, personal objects that were more likely to be passed down through the generations in family collections, or, if donated to a monastery, to remain ensconced within the treasury. A seventh-century sardonyx carved with a representation of the Annunciation in the Cabinet des Médailles is an example of an early Byzantine gem that was probably preserved and passed down through a familial line. In the tenth century this sardonyx

was carved on the reverse with an intaglio image of a *Deesis* and a prayer naming the new owner, a woman named Anna.[3] The seventh-century theme of the Annunciation indicates that its original owner was a woman, and we can reasonably surmise that the gem was passed down through the women of the family for centuries until Anna had it updated with an additional, more current intercessory theme.

In the early modern period Byzantine carved gemstones were collected as part of the large gem collections that were amassed by European aristocrats and rulers. They were collected alongside ancient cameos and intaglios, which reinforced their association with jewelry and other objects of small size. Many of these gem collections eventually entered state museums where they still remain. For example, most of the Byzantine gems in the Hermitage Museum were originally part of gem collection of the Duke of Orleans, one of the most significant art collectors of eighteenth-century Europe. The Russian Empress Catherine II acquired the Duke of Orleans' collection of ancient and medieval gems in 1787.[4] The Byzantine gems in the Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel are thought to have been part of the large gem collection owned by the Venetian nobleman Antonio Cappello, which Karl V, the ruler of Hessen-Kassel, acquired in the year 1700.[5] The provenance of the Byzantine gems in the Vatican cannot be traced earlier than 1762, when they are first mentioned in a catalogue compiled by Pope Clement XIII. It is, however, likely that some came from the private collection of Francesco Vettori of

[3] Guillou and Durand, *Byzance*, 277, no. 184.

[4] M. B. Piotrovskiĭ, *Treasures of Catherine the Great* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2000), 100-101.

[5] Hans Möbius, "Kameenschmuck im Hessischen Landesmuseum zu Kassel" in *Gold - Silber - Eisen* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1929), 53; Hans Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel. Zur Problematik der Datierung byzantinischer Gemmen," in *Mouseion, Studien aus Kunst und Geschichte: Festschrift Otto H. Förster,* ed. Heinz Ladendorf and Horst Vey (Cologne: DuMont Schauberg, 1960), 88.

Florence, who lived from 1692 to 1770, as many of the Vatican gems with Christian subject matter are from his collection.[6]

Byzantine gems were also given little attention from scholars working in the first half of the twentieth century because even those who specialized in glyptics disregarded them. This was partially due to the fact that there are relatively few Byzantine gems when compared with the many surviving examples from ancient Greece and Rome. With few examples, it was difficult to characterize or understand them. Scholars also held their Christian subject matter in lower regard than the classicizing themes found on antique gems, undoubtedly a legacy of Edward Gibbons' unfavorable characterization of Byzantium in *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.[7] For example, Adolf Furtwängler, an authority on ancient glyptics, concluded that gem carving must have been almost insignificant in Byzantium since there were relatively few surviving examples, the subject matter was almost exclusively religious, and, in his opinion, they were generally "lebloser," or "lifeless."[8] Furtwängler did not know that there are, in fact, two-hundred Byzantine gems. Citing Furtwängler, Ormonde Dalton echoed the sentiment that gem carving was rather unpopular in Byzantium. He also considered Byzantine gems inferior to those of ancient Greece and Rome, writing, "As a rule, the work does not rise above mediocrity, often falling distinctly below it…"[9] Dalton's objections concerned the carving style and

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[6] Romolo Righetti, "Le opere di Glittica dei Musei Annessi alla Biblioteca," *Atti della Pontificia Accademia romana di archeologia. Rendiconti,* ser. 3, 27 (1951-54): 286-287.

[7] Gibbon's negative characterization of Byzantium and its effects on Byzantine historiography have been widely noted. See Steve Runciman, "Gibbon and Byzantium," *Daedalus* 105, no. 3 (1976): 103-110; Robert S. Nelson, *Hagia Sophia, 1850-1950: Holy Wisdom Modern Monument* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 25-26.

[8] Adolf Furtwängler, *Die antiken Gemmen: Geschichte der Steinschneidekunst im klassischen Altertum*, vol. 3 (Leipzig: Gesecke & Devrient, 1900), 373.

[9] O. M. Dalton, *Byzantine Art and Archaeology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911), 367-340.

techniques of Byzantine gems, rather than their Christian subject matter. Failing to differentiate between early Byzantine gems and those that post-date Iconoclasm, as is customary in current scholarship, his opinion was formed on the incorrect assumption that Byzantine gems that were carved over a period of one thousand years share the same formal and technical characteristics.

Even more so than their unfavorable reception in early art historical scholarship, the study of Byzantine carved gems was limited by their dispersal across museums, church treasuries, and collections around the world. Many Byzantine gems were stored away in treasuries and private collections or set into Western regalia and sacred objects that were inaccessible. As the result of these circumstances, most Byzantine gems were simply unknown to scholars. This changed with the work of the German scholar Hans Wentzel, who was the first to study Byzantine gems seriously. Wentzel, who also worked on glass pastes and glyptics from the medieval West, first published an article on medieval carved gemstones in 1941. As the title "Mittelalterliche Gemmen, Versuch einer Grundlegung" makes clear, he sought early on to develop methods by which medieval gems could be studied and analyzed.[10] In the early 1950s he published two lengthy articles that catalogued and described the medieval gems in several European collections.[11] The articles were, and remain, valuable contributions to the study of Byzantine gems because they identify and illustrate gems which would otherwise be difficult to find, and because in their broad scope they present Western and Byzantine glyptics side by side, allowing the reader to make preliminary observations on different techniques, styles, and themes.

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[10] Hans Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen, Versuch einer Grundlegung," *Zeitschrift des deutschen Vereins für Kunstwissenschaft* 8 (1941): 45-98.

[11] Hans Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen in den Sammlungen Italiens," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 7 (1956): 239-278; Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen der Staatlichen Münzsammlung zu München," *Münchner Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst* ser. 3, 8 (1957): 37-56.

Further, in devoting his early work to finding, identifying, and categorizing Byzantine gems in collections throughout Europe, Wentzel became the first to study a large group of Byzantine carved gems together. His resulting scholarship remains the most important starting point for any study of medieval glyptics.

Wentzel's most important and lasting contributions to the study of Byzantine carved gemstones are his articles published in 1959 and 1960. These articles dealt with the difficult question of how to date, categorize, and localize Byzantine gems.[12] Leaving aside momentarily the more practical aspect of dating, these studies were important first and foremost because they gave Byzantine gems a typology. Since Byzantine gems had never before been systematically studied, their basic characteristics had never been identified. Wentzel's articles establish this fundamental information, including the most common types of gemstones used for carving, the general shapes and sizes of carved gems, and the fact that their subject matter is religious. Further, it is significant that Wentzel only began identifying carved gems as Byzantine starting in the post-Iconoclastic period. This is interesting because it excludes some of the most well-known early Byzantine gems, a group of sardonyxes carved in low relief bearing themes with angels and the Annunciation that date to the seventh century.[13] Wentzel thereby established the typological and chronological frameworks that are still used for the study of Byzantine gems.

Wentzel's work on dating also remains the fundamental method for current efforts to date Byzantine gems. As Wentzel demonstrated, Byzantine gems almost never survive to the present day with information that can date or localize them with certainty. This is mainly because they are almost never in their original mounts and because identifying inscriptions were rarely carved

[12] Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 9-22; Hans Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 88-96.

[13] Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 89, nos. 40 and 41.

directly onto the gems, most likely because of their small size. Wentzel's dating method is straightforward and systematic and consists of identifying datable gems around which others can be grouped on the basis of stylistic and iconographic criteria.[14] By providing a framework through which Byzantine gems can be examined, as well as by identifying and publishing many gems that would otherwise remain unknown, Wentzel's early work encouraged and enabled scholars to study them. Whether in a single catalogue entry or in an entire article, Byzantine carved gems began to appear in art historical scholarship with much greater frequency because of Wentzel's pioneering work. Wentzel also built upon his own work with one more important article, titled simply "Kameen," where he categorized all Byzantine gems known up until that point according to their iconography.[15]

Another scholar whose significant contributions to the study of Byzantine gems need to be recognized is the Russian Alisa Vladimirovna Bank. Many Byzantine gems are housed in Russian collections, and Bank's publications remain the authoritative resources on these gems. Bank was curator at the Hermitage Museum and is especially well known for publishing catalogues in both English and in Russian that highlight masterpieces of Byzantine Art in the Hermitage and in other collections from the former Soviet Union.[16]

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[14] Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 9-22.

[15] Hans Wentzel, "Kameen," in *Reallexikon zur Byzantinischen Kunst*, vol. 3, ed. Klaus Wessel and Marcell Restle (Stuttgart: A. Hiersemann, 1975), 903-928.

[16] A.V. Bank, *Vizantiĭskoe iskusstvo v sobraniiakh Sovetskogo Soiza* (St. Petersburg: Sovetskiĭ khudozhnik, 1966); A.V. Bank, *Byzantine Art in the Collection of Soviet Museums* (St. Petersburg: Aurora Art Publishers,); A.V. Bank, *Prikladnoe iskusstvo Vizantii IX - XII vv Očerki* (Moscow: Glav. red. vostochnoi lit-ry, 1978), 115-146; A. V. Bank, A. V., *Iskusstvo Vizantii v sobraniiakh SSSR: Katalog vystavki*, vols. 2 and 3 (Moscow: Sov. khudozhnik, 1977). The relevant pages from the latter two sources, which are Bank's Russian publications from 1977 and 1978, were translated for me by Anna Khakhamovich.

Bank's most important publication for the study of Byzantine gems is *Prikladnoe Iskusstvo Vizanti*, which is devoted to Byzantine applied arts of the tenth through twelfth centuries.[17] Here Bank identified Byzantine gems from Russian collections and submitted them to an in-depth analysis. Some of these gems had already been published by Wentzel, but others were published here for the first time by Bank. Although Wentzel's early work established the fundamental groundwork for the study of Byzantine gems, Bank's work in *Priklandoe Iskusstvo Vizanti* explored other aspects, mainly their iconography. For example, in dating the gems, Bank began with Wentzel's framework, but she also used iconography and epigraphy as secondary dating tools. This helped her date the gems with greater precision, as datable points may be drawn from the iconography of coins and seals. The usefulness of this method is exemplified by Bank's analysis of a group of gems carved with the image of John the Baptist with a bare chest. One well-known gem from this group is the sapphire with the image of John the Baptist that is set in the Crown of Napoleon in the Louvre Museum (no. 104).[18] On the Louvre sapphire the figure of John the Baptist represented from the waist up holding a cross-topped staff in his left hand and holding his right hand across his chest in the typical gesture of speech. His arm is bent at the elbow and angled outward and his chest is bare except for the garment that is draped over his left shoulder. Bank argued that all gems in this group must be from the late eleventh and twelfth centuries, since the iconographic detail of the Baptist's bare chest does not appear until that time.[19] This observation is helpful not only for dating this particular group of gems, but also

[17] Bank, *Prikladnoe iskusstvo Vizantii*, 115-146.

[18] Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 287, no. 202.

[19] Bank, *Prikladnoe iskusstvo Vizantii,* 138-139.

for dating others that compare closely in terms of carving technique, but which themselves cannot be dated through iconography.

Bank's work on iconography was interesting and insightful, but it should be mentioned that unlike Wentzel, Bank had the benefit of writing after several major catalogues of Byzantine coins and seals had been published, making an iconographic study of Byzantine gems possible.[20] To this point, in the 1970s and 1980s, several scholars in Eastern Europe also published a number of articles and museum catalogue entries that focused upon Byzantine gems and gave special attention to their iconography.[21] The sudden increase in scholarship on Byzantine carved gemstones in the 1970s and 1980s suggests that their study was not only delayed by the lack of fundamental scholarship and published examples, but also by the lack of reference books that contained iconographic material to which the gems could be compared. Once these barriers were overcome, scholars began subjecting Byzantine gems to the same analytical methods by which other types of Byzantine art were examined. They were no longer simply beautiful objects that were treasured and collected by connoisseurs, but works of art that could be seriously studied.

In the late twentieth century, the luxury arts of Byzantium were showcased in a series of major museum exhibitions in the United States and Europe. In these exhibitions Byzantine carved gems were displayed alongside jeweled reliquaries, carved ivories, and colorful enamels.

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[20] Alfred R. Bellinger, and Philip Grierson, eds., *Catalogue of Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection,* 4 vols. (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, 1966); G. Zacos and A. Veglery, *Byzantine Lead Seals* (Basel: Glückstadt, 1972); John Nesbitt and Nicolas Oikonomides, eds., *Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks and in the Fogg Museum of Art,* 6 vols. (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, 1966).

[21] Wassilij Poutsko, "Die zweiseitige Kamee in der Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore," in *Beiträge zur Kunst des Mittelalters: Festschrift für Hans Wentzel zum 60 Geburtstag,* eds. Rüdiger Becksmann, Ulf-Dietrich Korn, and Johannes Zahlten (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1975), 173-179; Wassilij Poutsko, "Deux oeuvres de la glyptiques byzantine à Pskov," *Byzantion* 39 (1969): 164-169; V. G. Poutsko, "Un camée byzantin à l'effigie du Précurseur," *Byzantion* 42 (1972): 107-144; Ljubica Popovich, "An examination of the Chilandar cameos," *Hilandarski zbornik* 5 (1983): 7-49; V. P. Darkevich, *Svetskoe iskusstvo Vizantii: proizvedeniia vizantiĭsk. khudozh. remesla v Vost. Evrope X-XIII* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1975), 280-290.

Byzantine gems were also published in high-quality, color photographs in the catalogues that accompanied the exhibits.[22] Their publication alongside other examples of Byzantine luxury arts solidified their status as true works of art and placed them in the public eye, but scholarship remained limited. The historiography of Byzantine gems in the last several decades consists mainly of entries in exhibition catalogues.[23] Of special importance is the catalogue devoted entirely to the *enkolpia* of the Vatopedi Monastery on Mt. Athos from 2001, in which many Byzantine gems are published for the first time.[24] Bank and Wentzel were not aware of these gems or of those of the Chilandar Monastery on Mt. Athos, which were also published more recently.[25] Their conclusions may have been different had the gems of the Vatopedi and Chilandar monasteries been published earlier.

[22] Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era 843-1261* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), 175-181; Christoph Stiegemann, *Byzanz, das Licht aus dem Osten: Kult und Alltag im Byzantinischen Reich vom 4. bis 15. Jahrhundert; Katalog der Ausstellung im Erzbischöflichen Diözesanmuseum* (Mainz: Von Zabern, 2001), 335-336, no. IV.80; Asen, Carder, and Nelson, *Sacred Art, Secular Context,* 56-71; Robin Cormack and Maria Vassilaki, eds., *Byzantium, 330-1453* (New York: Royal Academy of Arts, 2008), 230, no. 202.

[23] There are two exceptions - Byzantine gems are discussed in an article that focuses upon the larger question of the survival and reuse of antique cameos in Byzantium. See Cyril Mango and Marlia Mundell Mango, "Cameos in Byzantium," in *Cameos in Context. The Benjamin Zucker Lectures,* eds. M. Henig and M. Vickers (Oxford: D.J. Content, 1993), 57-76. In addition, an unpublished dissertation that I have not read was also completed in 2014 at Johns Hopkins University by Dr. James Magruder.

[24] G. Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Katia Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Brigitte Pitarakis, *Enkolpia: the Holy and Great Monastery of Vatopaidi* (Mount Athos: Holy and Great Monastery of Vatopaidi, 2001), 42-97.

[25] Popovich, "An Examination of the Chilandar Cameos," 7-49.

Chapter Two: The Gems

Byzantine carved gemstones are miniature relief sculptures. Small in size and carved from precious material, they have clear affinities with jewelry. Most were worn around the neck as pectorals, or *enkolpia*. Unlike jewelry, however, Byzantine carved gems were usually not outwardly displayed on the body. Although portraits in manuscripts and monumental painting document the jewelry and imperial regalia worn by important figures throughout the middle and late Byzantine periods, there is not a single depiction of a carved gemstone.[1] This is because Byzantine carved gemstones, which display iconic images of holy figures, functioned as personal icons. With few exceptions, they were not ostentatiously displayed like gemstones set into jewelry, but were instead cherished and used in private devotional practices.

There are also several carved gems that would have been too large to wear. They include the lapis lazuli plaque carved with the image of Christ Standing in the Kremlin Museum, which measures 11.8 cm in height, and the serpentine roundel of the Virgin Orant in the Victoria and Albert Museum, which measures 17.6 cm in diameter (nos. 22, 41).[2] The lapis lazuli's large size and its form, with a rectangular base and an arched top, suggests that it functioned as an icon plaque, much like carved icons in ivory and steatite from the middle Byzantine period. The serpentine roundel is thought to have been mounted in an architectural context, a theory that is

[1] Only one depiction of a carved gem exists, and it is from the early Byzantine period. This gem is depicted on the fibula of a member of Emperor Justinian's retinue in the apse mosaic of the Church of San Vitale in Ravenna. The image depicted on the gem is a profile bust or, possibly, a bird. See Mango and Mango, "Cameos in Byzantium," 65.

[2] On the lapis lazuli plaque in the Kremlin see Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 122, no. 635. On the serpentine roundel see Buckton, *Byzantium: Treasures of Byzantine Art and Culture in British Collections,* 158, no. 171.

supported by a rusty indentation on the reverse that indicates that it was mounted on a metal nail.[3]

In addition to being worn as *enkolpia,* Byzantine carved gems may have been placed into icon frames or book covers in a secondary context. This possibility is suggested by the fact that there are several reliquaries and book covers of the medieval West that are decorated with Byzantine carved gems, although there are no surviving Byzantine examples of this type of usage.[4] There is one Byzantine reliquary into which a carved gem is mounted, which is the small, gilded copper reliquary of the Precious Blood in the Treasury of San Marco (no. 145). The gem, a bloodstone shaped like a crucifix and carved with the image of the Crucifixion, was re-cut in order to be mounted within the reliquary. This suggests that it originally served another purpose, probably as an *enkolpion*.[5] It should be emphasized that the bloodstone Crucifixion is not placed on the reliquary as a decoration, but is hidden within it. Therefore, while this is a Byzantine example of a carved gem that has been reset into an object, it differs from the Western examples in which the carved gemstones served a decorative purpose.

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[3] Buckton, *Byzantium: Treasures of Byzantine Art and Culture in British Collections,* 158, no. 171; Paul Williamson, ed., *The Medieval Treasury: The Art of the Middle Ages in the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London: V&A Publication, 1986), 90.

[4] There are several Western reliquaries and book covers that are set with Byzantine gems. It is possible that this practice was known in Byzantine times as well. Two of the most well-known Western art works containing Byzantine gem are a book cover and a reliquary cross in Munich, both of which are Ottonian. See Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 19. The lapis lazuli roundel with the image of the Crucifixion inlaid with gold in San Marco is set into a Venetian frame. The original setting and purpose of the lapis lazuli roundel is unknown. See Buckton, *The Treasury of San Marco,* 258-262, no. 36.

[5] Marvin Ross, "Three Byzantine Cameos," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 3.1 (1990): 44-45, no. 3; Charles Davis, *Byzantine Relief Icons in Venice and Along the Adriatic Coast: Orants and Other Images of the Mother of God* (Munich: fondamentaARTE, 2006), plate 27; Andreas Rhoby, "Byzantinische Epigramme auf Ikonen und Objekten der Kleinkunst," in *Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung*, eds. Wolfram Hörandner, Anneliese Paul, and Andreas Rhoby (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2009), 257-258, no. Me83.

Definition of Frequently Used Terms

The nomenclature for gemstones was not standard in ancient and Byzantine lapidaries and it does not correspond directly with the nomenclature of today. Therefore, in order to ensure clarity and consistency, the most important terms used in this study must be defined and explained.

In Byzantine Greek, gemstones were called *litharia* (gemstones)*, lithoi timioi* (precious stones)*,* or simply *lithoi* (stones).[6] The word *anaglyph*, which in Ancient Greece was the term for a gem carved in relief, was not used in Byzantium to describe carved gemstones.[7] When mentioned in a textual source, a carved gemstone is usually referred to simply as a stone, *lithos*, or by the name of the gemstone itself. It is also sometimes called an *enkolpion*. For example, in

[6] The word *litharia* (λιθάρια) is used to describe gemstones in wills. See Maria Parani, "Byzantine Jewelry: The Evidence from Legal Documents," in *Intelligible Beauty: Recent Research on Byzantine Jewellery*, eds. Christopher Entwistle and Noël Adams (London: British Museum, 2010), 190. On *litharia* see also Sheila D. Campbell and Anthony Cutler, "Gems" in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (Oxford University Press, 1991), accessed December 2, 2014, http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195046526.001.0001/acref-9780195046526-e-2036. The word *lithoi timioi*, or λίθοι τίμιοι, means "precious stones" and is also found occasionally in wills. For example, the word is found in the inventory of the Pantaleimon Monastery of Mt. Athos, which records an *enkolpion* set with a precious stone and precious wood: ἐγκόλπιον χαλκὸν ἔχον ἔσωθεν λίθον τίμιον καὶ τίμιον ξύλον δὲδὲμένον ἀργυρὸν διἄχρυσον. Found in the database of Byzantine archival documents published by Ludovic Bender et. al., "Artefacts and Raw Materials in Byzantine Archival Documents / Objets et matériaux dans les documents d'archives byzantins," accessed December 2, 2014, http://www.unifr.ch/go/typika. In many cases, a gemstone is designated with the general word for stone, *lithos,* or λίθος. This can be found, for example, in Michael Psellos' treatise on the properties of stones. Although all of the stones that are discussed are gemstones, they are simply called stones, or *lithoi.* See M. Psellos, *Philosophica minora*, I, ed. John Duffy and Dan O'Meara, op. 34 (Leipzig, B. G. Teubner, 1989), 116-119.

[7] The word ἀνάγλυφο is cited as the Ancient Greek term for a gem carved in relief in James David Draper, "Cameo appearances," *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 65.4 (Spring, 2008): 5. I have not encountered this word in Byzantine texts on the subject of carved gemstones.

a poem written on an *enkolpion* of the Virgin the word stone is not mentioned. It is, however, clear that the material of the *enkolpion* is a carved gemstone or, perhaps, a carved steatite, because the poem specifies that the image of the Virgin is carved. The poem reads:[8]

> Εἰς ἐγκόλπιον ἔχον τὴν ὑπεραφίαν Θεοτόκον
> Ἔχει ὅλον ὧδε·
>
> Ἐν καρδίας ἔχων σε πλαξὶ, Παρθένε,
> Θεοῦ λόγον πλὰξ ὥσπερ ἐγγεγλυμμένην
> ὡς θυρεὸν νῦν καὶ πρὸ τῶν στέρνων φέρω
> Φεόδωρος σὸς Δουκοφυὴς οἰκέτης.
>
> On an *enkolpion* having the all holy Theotokos,
> the following:
>
> I have you (carved) on the plaques of the heart, Virgin,
> Just as the plaque was carved with the word of God
> Now I your servant Theodore Doukophyes
> carry you as a shield over the breast.

Without specifically indicating that the *enkolpion* carved with the image of the Virgin is a gemstone, the material of gemstone or steatite is implied by the use of the verb ἐγγλύφω (to carve), as well as by the comparison of the carved *enkolpion* with the stone tablets upon which the Ten Commandments were engraved. The comparison elevates the holiness of the carved object as well as the act of carving itself, for the tablets with the Ten Commandments were not carved with human hands but through the divine will of God. Interestingly, other poems written on the topic of Byzantine carved gems also allude to the miraculous nature of the representation of a holy figure in stone. This trope will be explored further in Chapter Nine, which examines to the materiality of gemstone *enkolpia* and their use in private devotion.

[8] S. Lampros, "Ho Markianos kodix 524," *Neos Hellenonmnenon* 8 (1911): 22, no. 54. The translations in this dissertation are my own, unless otherwise indicated.

Today, a gem carved in relief so that the image emerges above the surface of the background is called a "cameo." A cameo is the opposite of an intaglio, which is a gemstone carved so that the image is incised below the gem's surface. Traditionally, a cameo has been understood as a multi-layered stone that is carved so that the image in relief is a different color than the stone of the background. The word cameo derives from the medieval Latin word *camahūtus*, which is first attested to in the thirteenth century.[9]

Despite the fact that the term "cameo" did not exist in Byzantium, it has long been used in scholarly literature to describe Byzantine gemstones carved in relief. The term is used in the early twentieth-century catalogues in which Byzantine carved gems are published, including a catalogue published by the Kunsthistorisches Musuem in 1927 and Wladimir Grüneisen's catalogue of Christian art from 1930.[10] Hans Wentzel, Alisa Bank, and Cyril and Marlia Mango continued to use the term in their studies of Byzantine glyptics.[11] Although scholars have used the modern term cameo to designate a Byzantine carved gem, I have chosen not to use it in this dissertation. The term is unsuitable, not because it did not exist in Byzantium, but because its connotations contradict the aesthetic character and function of Byzantine carved gems.

The objection regarding aesthetics is rooted in the fact that the term cameo is associated with multi multi-layered stones such as sardonyx that are carved to achieve a color contrast between the figure and the background. Sardonyx accounts for only fourteen percent of surviving examples of Byzantine glyptics, and in most cases Byzantine gems are carved from

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[9] "cameo, n.," *OED Online* (Oxford University Press, September 2014), accessed November 17, 2014, http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/26687?redirectedFrom=cameo.

[10] Fritz Eichler and Ernst Kris, *Die Kameen im Kunsthistorischen Museum: beschreibender Katalog* (Vienna: A. Schroll, 1927), 94-98; Gruneisen, *Art Chrétien primitif*, 81-82.

[11] Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 9-21; Wentzel, "Kameen," 903-928; Bank, *Byzantine Art in the Collection of Soviet Museums*, 20-21; Mango and Mango, "Cameos in Byzantium," 56-76.

stones without layers that yield no color contrast between the relief and the background. The term cameo is therefore at best imprecise, and at worst it makes incorrect claims about the aesthetic of Byzantine glyptics. The second and more problematic issue concerns function. As already noted, cameos are associated with jewelry and the outward display of luxury. Since the time of the Renaissance they have been worn as objects of personal adornment or displayed among other collected treasures as a sign of erudition and wealth.[12] Likewise, in ancient Rome, sardonyx cameos were worn outwardly as jewelry, usually as signet rings or broaches. They were also collected as small artworks and there is even evidence that large collections were displayed in cabinets.[13] In contrast, in Byzantium carved gemstones were usually concealed beneath clothing and worn as *enkolpia*, which were objects of personal devotion and protection. A survey of Byzantine monastic *typika* indicates that *enkolpia* were considered religious objects instead of jewelry, as they are listed under the category of icons.[14] The association of the word "cameo" with jewelry and outward adornment therefore contradicts the function of Byzantine carved gems. In order to avoid misrepresenting Byzantine carved gemstones as jewelry, I have chosen instead to use terms such as "gem," "carved gem," and "gemstone." Whenever possible I refer specifically to the type of gemstone under discussion, such as bloodstone or amethyst. I also refer to Byzantine carved gemstones as *enkolpia.*

The other important terms to define are those for the gemstones themselves. I have chosen to refer to gemstones using the modern English terms from Robert Webster's *Gems:*

[12] Martha McCrory, "Cameos and Intaglios," *Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies* 25, no. 2 (2000): 55.

[13] Draper, "Cameo Appearances," 6.

[14] Parani, "Byzantine Jewelry: The Evidence from Legal Documents," 187.

Their Sources, Descriptions and Identification, today's standard handbook for gemologists.[15] This is important to clarify because in antiquity the nomenclature of gemstones was not consistent and does not always correspond with the standard terms of today.[16] The modern names of some stones, such as amethyst and rock crystal, have endured since antiquity, but others, such as lapis lazuli and bloodstone, have seen shifts in meaning. For example, today bloodstone refers to a green stone struck through with red veins and inclusions, but in ancient lapidaries this stone was known as heliotrope.[17] Hematite, a word that in Greek literally means bloodstone, referred in antiquity to iron oxide or red jasper.[18] In this study I have used the term bloodstone to refer to green jasper with red inclusions, with the acknowledgement that in antiquity this stone was called heliotrope.

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[15] Robert Webster and Peter G. Read, *Gems: Their Sources, Descriptions, and Identification* (Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1994).

[16] On challenges surrounding inconsistent nomenclature, both in antiquity and in modern scholarship, see Margaret Sax, "Recognition and Nomenclature of Quartz Materials with Specific Reference to Engraved Gemstones," *Jewellery Studies* 7 (1996): 63-72.

[17] Today's bloodstone, a green stone with red inclusions, is identified as heliotrope in Pliny's *Natural History* and in the lapidary of Damigeron. See Pliny the Elder, "Book XXXVII: The Natural History of Precious Stones," in *The Natural History of Pliny,* vol. 6, trans. John Bostock and Henry T. Riley (London: Bohn, 1857), 450, chap 60 and "Damigeron-Evax" in *Les lapidaires grecs,* eds. Robert Halleux and Jacques Schamp (Paris: Les Belles lettres, 1985), 236-248. Heliotrope is not mentioned in the lapidary of Theophrastus. Webster does not discuss bloodstone in his entry on jasper on pages 240-242, likely because jasper can be found in many colors and patterns, but in his entry on chalcedony he clarifies that the English word "bloodstone" refers to green and red stones that can be either "chalcedony or plasma with spots of red iron oxide or red jasper resembling blood spots against a dark green background." See Webster and Read, *Gems: Their Sources, Descriptions, and Identification,* 235.

[18] Hematite is mentioned in Damigeron's lapidary but only in regards to its properties – its physical appearance is not described. See Halleux and Schamp, "Damigeron-Evax," 245-246. For Pliny on Hematite, see Pliny the Elder, "Book XXXVI: The Natural History of Stones," 363-364, chap. 37. Theophrastes' description of hematite indicates that it is probably iron oxide or red jasper, or both; he describes it as having the appearance of dried blood. See Theophrastus, *On Stones: Introduction, Greek Text, English Translation, and Commentary,* ed. and trans. Earle Radcliffe Caley and John F. C. Richards (Columbus: Ohio State University, 1956), 53 and the commentary of Caley and Richards on p. 138. For Webster's entry on hematite see Webster and Read, *Gems: Their Sources, Descriptions, and Identification*, 282-284.

As another example, today the word sapphire refers to a semi-translucent blue gem of the mineral corundum. It is extremely hard, measuring 9.0 on the Mohs scale.[19] In antiquity, the word sapphire (σάπφειρος) referred to what is today called lapis lazuli, an opaque dark blue stone struck through with pyrite veins that have the appearance of streaks of gold. That the word sapphire referred to lapis lazuli in antiquity is made clear from the lapidaries of Theophrastus and Pliny. Pliny wrote that sapphire was blue and opaque.[20] His specification that the stone was opaque rules out the possibility that the stone under discussion was today's gemstone of corundum, which is translucent almost by definition. Theophrastus wrote that the stone was spotted with gold, which is not a characteristic of the gemstone of corundum and instead must refer to the gold colored streaks of pyrite that run through lapis lazuli.[21] The word sapphire is not Greek in origin and may be Phoenician, according to Liddel and Scott.[22] The *OED* suggests that it is derived from the Sanskrit word *çanipriya*, meaning "dear to Saturn."[23] It is not known how or why the name sapphire shifted from lapis lazuli to the semi-translucent gemstone of corundum. Theophrastus lists no stone that would correspond to today's sapphire, but Pliny describes a stone that is similar to amethyst, but lighter, the *hyacinth*.[24] In the *Hexameron,* the

[19] Webster and Read, *Gems: Their Sources, Descriptions, and Identification,* 73-78.

[20] Pliny the Elder, "Book XXXVII: The Natural History of Precious Stones," 432, chap. 39.

[21] "…ἡ σάπφειρος· αὕτη δ'ἐστὶν ὥσπερ χρυσόπαστος." See Theophrastus, *On Stones*, 22 (for the Greek text), 50 (for the English translation), and 136-137 (for the commentary of Caley and Richards).

[22] According to Liddel and Scott, the word is probably of Phoenician origins. See "σάπφειρος" in Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1889), 723.

[23] "sapphire, n.," *OED Online* (Oxford University Press, September 2014), accessed November 17, 2014, http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/170869?redirectedFrom=sapphire.

[24] Pliny the Elder, "Book XXXVII: The Natural History of Precious Stones," 434, chap. 41.

hyacinth is described as sky blue.[25] In the eleventh century, Michael Psellos wrote that hyacinth had the appearance of the sea.[26] These sources indicate that the stone that is today called sapphire was called hyacinth in antiquity.

Materials

According to the nomenclature and categorization methods of modern geology, most Byzantine carved gems belong to the quartz family of gemstones. This broad category includes translucent amethyst and rock crystal, opaque and colorful chalcedonies and chrysoprase, multi-layered sardonyx, and finally jasper, which, when struck through with impurities, can appear in many colorful forms.[27] Sapphire, serpentine, nephrite, and lapis lazuli were also used in Byzantine gem carving.

Jasper is the stone most frequently used in Byzantine gem carving. More than half of the two hundred and one gems included in this study are jasper. Some are opaque, green jasper with no impurities and others are red jasper, often speckled with white or yellow inclusions. Most, however, are of bloodstone, which as noted already is a type of green jasper struck through with red veins that was called heliotrope in antiquity. Bloodstones may speckled with round red spots or struck through with long red streaks, depending on the angle at which the stone is cut. The red inclusions in this stone brought to mind blood and fire, which endowed it with meaning and potency in the minds of those that cherished gemstone *enkolpia* carved from this material.

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[25] On the description of hyacinth as a sky blue stone in the *Hexameron* see Halleux and Schamp, *Les lapidaires grecs*, 328n7.

[26] "Ὑάκινθος· τοῦτον τίκτει μὲν ἡ Ἰνδῶν, ἔστι δὲ θαλαττόχροος." Psellos, *Philosophica minora,* I, op. 34, 118.

[27] Webster and Read, *Gems: Their Sources, Descriptions, and Identification,* 219-242.

Altogether, eighty-three of the two hundred Byzantine gems are carved of bloodstone, accounting for forty-two percent of the total.

The second most common type of gemstone used in Byzantine gem carving is sardonyx. It accounts for twenty-eight of the gems in this study. Sardonyx was the stone most frequently used in Roman cameo carving and there is evidence that Roman sardonyx cameos survived through the Byzantine period in Constantinople and continued to be used and treasured, even in a Christian context. For example, a Roman sardonyx cameo of a youthful Augustus was inscribed in Byzantine Greek with the words "The Holy Forty" in reference to the forty martyrs who died in a frozen lake.[28] Another Roman sardonyx cameo, the largest in existence at 31 cm high, was housed in the Palace Treasury of Constantinople before being brought to France in the thirteenth century. Its secular subject matter of Emperor Augustus and his descendents was likely re-interpreted with Christian meaning, as suggested by the fact that it was framed like an icon with enameled roundels of evangelists and other images of saints.[29]

Given the tradition of sardonyx cameo carving in Roman times, it is unsurprising that sardonyx would continue to be used in the Byzantine glyptics arts. The banded stone is a natural choice for gem carving since it allows for color shading and stark contrasts between background and foreground. Byzantine scholarship, however, has historically excluded many sardonyx carvings from the corpus of Byzantine gems. This is largely because of the views of Hans Wentzel, who classified most medieval sardonyx carvings as Italian and connected them with the sardonyx cameos produced for the Hohenstaufen court.[30] This study argues that some of these

[28] Mango and Mango, "Cameos in Context," 58-59.

[29] Ibid., 58-59, 64.

[30] Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel, 92-93.

sardonyxes should be reattributed to Byzantium, and the evidence for this position is presented in Chapter Six.

When considered together, sapphire and blue chalcedony are the third most popular type of gem used in Byzantine gem carving. In this study there are eleven blue chalcedony carvings and eleven sapphires, comprising eleven percent of the total number of gems. The question of whether blue chalcedonies and sapphires should be grouped together for the purpose of study is difficult to answer. On the one hand, ancient and medieval lapidaries prove without a doubt that that the Byzantines were aware of the differences between stones. They knew that while sapphires and blue chalcedony gems look similar, they are not the same. Sapphire was known as hyacinth while blue chalcedony was recognized as it is today as a cloudy variety of jasper.[31] On the other hand, it is difficult to understand the extent to which ancient and medieval gem cutters and patrons differentiated between stones, especially given that ancient and medieval names for stones were not consistent. There is evidence that gemstones were counterfeited with dyes and stains, which suggests that similarly colored gems could be passed off as substitutes for other, more precious gemstones.[32] Byzantine carved sapphires, blue chalcedonies, and amethysts also share formal and technical aspects that suggest that they were thought to be similar. In fact, their distinct carving style sets them apart from carved jaspers and lapis lazuli to the extent that they must be analyzed separately. The Byzantines' similar treatment of sapphire, blue chalcedony,

[31] The ancient definition of sapphire as hyacinth was already discussed. See notes 24-26 above. Pliny wrote that jasper could be found many forms and colors, including the color blue, and that the cloudy type came from Chalcedon. In all likelihood, this cloudy jasper from Chalcedon corresponds with today's chalcedony, a cloudy, blue-grey variety of jasper. See Pliny the Elder, "Book XXXVII: The Natural History of Precious Stones," 430-432, chap. 37.

[32] Gems could be counterfeited by staining other, less precious gems or by creating imitations in glass paste. Counterfeiting gemstones is described by Pliny in ibid., 415, chap. 20, 431, chap. 37, 432, chap. 38, 435, chap. 44. Residual pigments on the chalcedony of the Archangel Michael in the reliquary cross in Prague suggests that it was stained in order to enhance its color from a grayish color to blue. See Jaroslav Bauer, "The Reliquary Coronation Cross from the St. Vitus Treasury," *Technologia Artis* 2 (1992): 3.

and amethyst suggests that while we will never know with certainty whether a perfect, translucent sapphire was valued more than a cloudy blue chalcedony, we can reasonably group them together for the purpose of study.

Workshops and Carving Techniques

Byzantine sources do not paint a clear picture of the workshops in which artisans who carved gems plied their craft. The best source on guilds in Byzantium is the *Book of the Eparch,* an imperial document that imparted laws that regulated the trades and crafts of Constantinople.[33] Although the complete text survives only in a fourteenth-century manuscript, several partial texts also survive, one of which names Emperor Leo VI as the author. This has led to the conclusion that the *Book of the Eparch* originates in the tenth century but, like many medieval texts, it was a living document that underwent revisions as needed until the fourteenth century.[34] The second chapter of the *Book of the Eparch* imparts laws that govern the *argyroprates*, or those who traded in gold, silver, and precious stones. The laws concerning these dealers of bullion are generally concerned with regulating the way in which they handled precious materials and especially with preventing the unauthorized sale of gold. The laws do not specify whether these individuals were also the artisans and jewelers who worked the precious metals and stones. Although there is some debate, scholars today generally believe that the occupation of the *argyroprates* was

[33] Edwin Hanson Freshfield, trans., *Roman Law in the Later Roman Empire: Byzantine Guilds, Professional and Commercial; Ordinances of Leo VI, c. 895, from the Book of the Eparch, Rendered into English* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1938), 10-13.

[34] Alexander Kazhdan, "Book of the Eparch," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), accessed November 19, 2013, http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195046526.001.0001/acref-9780195046526-e-0785.

primarily trade, and that the artisans and goldsmiths were separate individuals who purchased precious materials from the *argyroprates* and formed them into the precious objects.[35]

In her study on Byzantine steatites, Ioli Kalavrezou has argued that steatite and ivory icons were produced in the same workshop as they were carved some the same tools and techniques.[36] Although gemstones are harder than ivories and steatites, they were also carved with drills and, as the fourth chapter of this study will demonstrate, Byzantine carved gems share some of the same carving styles of ivories and steatites. The similarities are strongest in the tenth and early eleventh centuries and after that they are mostly observed only in the larger pieces. For this reason it may be proposed that initially gems were carved in the same workshops as ivory and steatites, or at least in workshops with a shared, elite clientele. Over time other workshops, perhaps those that specialized primarily in jewelry, also took up gems carving. This may explain why most of the carved gems date to the twelfth century and they vary considerably in quality and carving style at this time. This seems to suggest that by the twelfth century carved gemstones were being produced for a wider audience.

When Constantinople fell in 1204, carved gem production in the capital slowed or came to a halt, at least in the first half of the thirteenth century. There are, however, a considerable number of carved jaspers that were produced in a provincial center in the thirteenth century. It is impossible to identify the center with certainty, but Thessaloniki and Jerusalem are the most

[35] Alexander Kazhdan and Anthony Cutler, "Jeweler," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), accessed November 19, 2013, http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195046526.001.0001/acref-9780195046526-e-2571; Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 52-53; Pentcheva, *The Sensual Icon,* 211-212.

[36] Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 53.

likely possibilities.[37] These thirteenth-century gems are described in greater detail in Chapter Four.

In this dissertation the late Byzantine period is defined as 1261 to 1453. The material evidence suggests that gems carving was in decline in the late Byzantine period, as fewer carved gems can be identified from this time. This impression is consistent with historical knowledge of this last phase of Byzantine history. It is thought that economic changes forced a change in workshop practices and a decline in the demand for luxury goods such as carved gems. Workshops decreased in size and number and certain imperial workshops, such as those that had manufactured precious textiles, lost their state sponsorship and became independent. Jewelers ran private, independent workshops and their work became more specialized.[38] Although little is known about the workshops that produced carved gemstones, the material evidence suggests that they, too, were affected by these economic conditions. The gems from the late Byzantine period are not only few in number, but they are also isolated with regard to their carving style and iconography. This seems to indicate that they were produced intermittently for individual commissions.

Although we have only a general impression of the organization of workshops in Byzantium, we do know the carving techniques that were used to cut gems. The techniques for carving gemstones are not described in any surviving Byzantine literary sources, but they can be reconstructed from sources from ancient Greece and Rome and the medieval West. Theophrastus and Pliny the Elder both emphasized the difficulty of cutting hard gemstones. Theophrastus noted that some stones are so hard that they resisted iron and could only be carved

[37] Popovich, "An examination of the Chilandar cameos," 17-18, 43-44.

[38] Klaus-Peter Matschke, "The Late Byzantine Urban Economy, Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries," in *The Economic History of Byzantium,* vol. 2, ed. Angeliki Laiou (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library, 2008), 491-492.

by other stones.[39] Pliny discussed gem carving in his entry on *adamas*, a hard stone that may refer to the modern diamond. He advised that *adamas* could only be cut after first being warmed in the fresh blood of a he-goat. Following these almost magical instructions, he recommended that fragments of the cut *adamas* stone be used to carve other hard gems.[40]

The excerpts from Pliny and Theophrastus remind us that Byzantine gem cutters must have acquired their raw gemstones in rough, irregularly shaped forms. Before the gem could even be carved, it had to be cut and shaped to a desired form. The methods of cutting, shaping, and polishing gems are described in two sources from the medieval West. The first source is Heraclius' "Arts and Colors of the Romans."[41] Heraclius, writing in the eleventh century, repeated Pliny's recommendation that the stone must be warmed in goat's blood before it could be cut. He elaborated upon Pliny's directions somewhat, adding that urine must be combined with the blood and that the goat should have been fed on ivy. His directions end, however, with the discussion of goat's blood and he failed to include information about the actual carving tools and techniques. With his strange elaborations upon fanciful ingredients and omission of practical information, it appears that Heraclius' goal was to keep the techniques of gem cutting secret and intriguing, perhaps to guard his trade or simply to interest wealthy patrons.[42]

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[39] Theophrastus, *On Stones,* 54.

[40] Pliny the Elder, "Book XXXVII: The Natural History of Precious Stones," 405-408, chap. 15.

[41] Heraclius, "The Colors and Arts of the Romans," in *Early Medieval Art 300 - 1150: Sources and Documents,* ed. Caecilia Davis-Weyer (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1971), 175-176.

[42] This is the suggestion of Genevra Kornbluth in *Engraved Gems of the Carolingian Empire*, 8-9.

More detailed information about the technique of stone cutting is provided by another medieval writer, Theophilus Presbyter, who wrote *De diversis artibus* in the thirteenth century.[43] He wrote that before being engraved, a raw gemstone should be fastened onto a stick and ground with sandstone until it is formed into the desired shape. Then, it is polished until smooth with another, finer, piece of sandstone. Last, the gem is polished further until it shines, first with a piece of tile and then with goat's skin attached to the tile. Although these practical directions must have reflected actual practice, Theophilus' next words repeated the recommendation that the gem must be soaked in goat's blood before it could be carved.[44]

Ancient and medieval treatises stopped short at describing their actual carving methods, preferring to distract the interested reader with the fanciful ingredient of goat's blood. The tools and techniques of ancient and medieval gem carving have been reconstructed by gem specialists, however, whose close examination of engraved gemstones from antiquity to the modern era have led them to conclude that carving methods stayed consistent over the centuries.[45] The hardness of the gemstone material meant that a metal carving tool alone was not sufficient to cut a gem. Instead, the copper and iron drills used to cut gems were first dipped in a grinding agent made from a mixture of oil and the granulated powder of a hard stone. Several different types of drills were used that differed in shape and width, depending upon the type of cut that was desired.

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[43] Theophilus, *On divers arts: The Foremost Medieval Treatise on Painting, Glassmaking, and Metalwork*, trans. John G. Hawthorne and Cyril Stanley Smith (New York: Dover Publications, 1979), 189-191. Cited in ibid.

[44] Theophilus, *On divers arts,* 190.

[45] Lorenz Natter, *Traité de la méthode antique de graver en pierres fines comparee avec la méthode moderne* (Londres: Auteur, 1974), i - xxxix. Cited in Marianne Maaskant-Kleibrink, "The Microscope and Roman Republican Gem Engraving. Some Preliminary Remarks," in *Technology and Analysis of Ancient Gemstones: Proceedings of the European Workshop held at Ravello, European University Centre for Cultural Heritage, November 13-16,* eds. Tony Hackens and Ghislaine Moucharte (Rixensart: Pact Belgium, 1987), 190.

Vertical drills were rods to which drill ends could be attached to carve out holes, circles, or round, concave forms. Horizontal drills were cutting wheels that were used to make grooves or to carve out large areas. The drill was attached to a lathe that was operated by foot in order to turn it. The gem was pressed against the rotating drill with enough pressure that the hard material could be carved. Another method for hollowing out areas of stone was a technique called "a ferro," where a rounded iron file was used to scoop away large cuts.[46]

Since a gem carved in relief is made by cutting away stone until the figure emerges above the background surface in relief, the carvers who produced Byzantine gems must have used a combination of "a ferro" scooping techniques and large, rounded horizontal drills to remove the area around the figure. A close examination of Byzantine gems reveals that a thick, rounded cutting wheel was used to cut away the basic outline of the figure. The traces of the wheel can be seen around the outline of the figure on many gems, including the bloodstone with the Virgin Blachernitissa in the Victoria and Albert Museum and the bloodstone with St. George in the British Museum (nos. 52, 130).[47] On the Victoria and Albert gem the rounded cuts of the drill are visible as they form the lower outline of the half-length figure of the Virgin. The drill was rolled several times to cut away the material around the lower half of the figure, as is evident by the uneven incised traces that are still present. Most noticeable is a deep cut at the bottom of the gem. The presence of these traces suggest that some incisions were made too deeply into the material while the area around the relief carving was being hollowed out, and therefore remained even after the background was polished smooth.

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[46] Maaskant-Kleibrink, "The Microscope and Roman Republican Gem Engraving," 59-60 and 190-191. See especially Fig. 3, in which Maaskant-Kleibrink reproduces charts originally published in Natter that show different types of vertical and horizontal drills, as well as the mechanism used to hold the gem in place while it was cut.

[47] Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury,* 86-87, a.; Buckton, *Byzantium: Treasures of Byzantine Art and Culture in British Collections,* 159, no. 173.

On the British Museum gem with the image of St. George, the area around the saint's right shoulder betrays the trace of a thick circular drill that was used to cut away the basic outline of the figure. The diagonal cut of the drill extends above the figure's shoulder, indicating that a rough outline of the saint was cut away first, and that the figure was subjected to more detailed carving later with smaller drill attachments.

After the area surrounding the figure was cut away, the background was polished smooth using the slurry made from ground bits of hard stone. The figure itself was carved using finer drill attachments that, depending on the angle at which they were held and the form of the drill, made cuts of different size and shape into the stone. The bloodstone with the image of Christ Pantokrator in the British Museum, an eleventh-century piece wrought in a rather abstract carving style, was formed with the curved cuts of wheel drills of varying thickness (no. 26).[48] A thick wheel drill was used to form linear incisions that represent the folds of Christ's garment, while a thinner drill was used to form details of his hair and face. Since on this bloodstone the incisions are left undisguised, the carving implements and techniques may be more easily identified.

On carved gems where the incisions are disguised and there is a greater degree of plastic modeling, the smooth roundness of modeled anatomical forms and garments were achieved through gradual abrading using the oil-based grinding agent. For example, this technique was used to create the smooth, well-modeled face and hands of the bloodstone with the image of the Virgin Orant in the Louvre (no. 117).[49] The degree to which such careful plastic modeling was employed depended upon the carving style and overall quality of the gem. Some Byzantine

[48] O. M. Dalton, *Catalogue of the Engraved Gems of the Post-Classical Periods in the Department of British and Mediaeval Antiquities and Ethnography in the British Museum* (London: Printed by order of the Trustees, 1915), 2, no. 8.

[49] Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 283, no. 194.

gems were more carefully modeled to produce naturalistic forms. The best example is the bloodstone with the image of Christ Standing in the Victoria and Albert Museum (no. 1).[50] This early tenth-century gem belonged to Emperor Leo VI and displays a degree of plastic modeling and naturalistic anatomical detail that rivals the finest carved ivories of the tenth century. There are hardly any drill marks visible, as every surface, sharp angle, and incision has been smoothed and rounded using an abrasive grinding agent. There are also carved gems from the eleventh and twelfth centuries that were wrought in a more abstract, abbreviated carving style, yet they are not necessarily of poor quality. The aforementioned bloodstone carved with the image of Christ in the British Museum is an example of a gem of good quality that was intentionally carved in an abstract manner (no. 26). The incisions of the drill were left undisguised to produce a clean and striking result.

Form and Format

The dimensions of Byzantine carved gems were dictated by the natural size of the gemstones themselves. Excluding two large plaques of serpentine and lapis lazuli that provide an exception to the rule, the average height of gems in this study is 3.7 cm and the median is 3.3 cm.[51] The natural shape of the gemstones also influenced the form into which they were cut. Gemstones have rounded edges and exist naturally in circular, oval, or tear-dropped shapes. In

[50] Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury,* 86-87, b.

[51] The average and median are calculated from the dimensions of 161 gems. Measurements are unfortunately not available for all of the two hundred and one gems included in this study. The two plaques where the dimensions were withheld from the calculations are the serpentine roundel of Nicephoros Botaniates in the Victoria and Albert Museum, which measures 17.6 cm, and the lapis lazuli plaque with Christ Standing in the Kremlin Museum, which measures 11.8 cm. On the lapis plaque see Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* 122, no. 635. On the serpentine roundel see Buckton, *Byzantium: Treasures of Byzantine Art and Culture in British Collections,* 158, no. 171 and Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury,* 90-91.

some cases, the natural shape of the stone was preserved and the gems were not cut down significantly. In other cases, especially with carved gems of a higher quality, the gemstones were reshaped into a symmetrical form or into a specific shape such as a circle or a rectangle with an arched top. The edges of Byzantine gems were frequently beveled for the purpose of mounting.

The size and shape of the gemstones also impacted their subject matter and iconography. Round, circular gems were usually carved with a single bust image of a holy figure whereas long, narrow, oval-shaped gems typically displayed a portrait of standing figure. Gems that were larger than average were selected for the portrayal of narrative scenes, since multi-figured themes required more compositional space. Since Byzantine gems were private devotional objects that were typically carved with images of favorite patron saints, it should be assumed that subject matter was selected first and then a suitable stone was chosen based upon several factors including subject matter and cost, as well as the size, shape, and type of available stones.

The format and shape of Byzantine gems evolved over time. One of the most common shapes for gems carved in the tenth and early eleventh centuries was the circle. The shape and composition of these gems were modeled upon coins and seals, which also had a round format. A preference for the round format can be observed in other examples of tenth-century Byzantine art such as ivories, enamels, and even illuminated manuscripts, where circular medallions displaying busts of holy figures were very common. Examples of gems cut into perfectly round circles include several bloodstones with the image of Christ Pantokrator (nos. 17-20).[52] The

[52] The bloodstones of Christ Pantokrator are located in the Cabinet des Médailles, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Vatican Museum, and the University of Pennsylvania Museum. On the bloodstone in the Victoria and Albert Museum see Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury,* 86-87, c. On the bloodstone in the Vatican see Righetti, "Le opere di Glittica dei Musei Annessi alla Biblioteca Vaticana," 332-333, table V, no. 1. On the bloodstone in the University of Pennsylvania Museum see Popovich, "A Byzantine Cameo," 28-33. On the bloodstone in the Cabinet des Médailles see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 281, no. 190.

image of Christ Pantokrator is especially well suited for the round format and it is therefore expected that some gems carved with this image would be round in shape. There are also gems shaped as perfectly round circles that were carved with other subjects. For example, according to drawings of the Ottonian "Morgengabe" cross in Bamberg, which is now lost, the three circular Byzantine gems that were embedded into the arms of the cross represented John the Theologian, St. Nicholas, and the Archangel Michael (nos. 5-7).[53]

Gemstones with a rectangular base and an arched top appear in the tenth century but more frequently in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. This shape recalls the form of larger relief icons in ivory and steatite, although most gems in this shape, with the exception of the large lapis lazuli plaque in the Kremlin Museum, were small enough to be worn as *enkolpia*. Gems in this shape do, however, tend to be larger than average and most are carved with the image of a standing figure. With their imagery and size, carved gems in this shape exhibit a monumental quality that is more characteristic of larger relief icons. As another parallel with the larger relief icons in ivory, in which the side panels of triptychs are often double-sided, gems in this shape are also frequently carved on both sides. For example, a large cross is carved on the reverse of two large gems with the image of Christ Standing, as well as the bloodstone of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa in the Walters Art Gallery (nos. 1, 21, 45).[54] Other gems in this shape, such as the

[53] Percy Ernst Schramm, and Florentine Mütherich, *Denkmale der deutschen Könige und Kaiser* (Munich: Prestel, 1962), 160, table 341; Hans Wentzel, "Das byzantinische Erbe der ottonischen Kaiser – hypothesen über den Brautschatz der Theophano," *Aachener Kunstblater* 41 (1971): 34.

[54] The bloodstone of Christ Standing is located in the Victoria and Albert Museum (no. 1). See Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury,* 86-87, b. The lapis lazuli of Christ Standing is located in the Kremlin Museum (no. 21). See Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 122 no. 635. The bloodstone of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa is located in the Walters Art Gallery (no. 45). See Dorothy Eugenia Miner, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art: an Exhibition Held at the Baltimore Museum of Art, April 25-June 22* (Baltimore: Trustees of the Walters Art Gallery, 1947), 114, no. 555.

double-sided lapis lazuli in the Louvre, are carved in relief with an image of a holy figure on both sides (no. 56).[55]

The rectangular shape only appeared as early as the late eleventh century and is more frequently found among gems that date to the twelfth century. It never became a popular shape for carved gems, likely because it requires a gemstone to be cut down significantly from its original shape and therefore wastes material. This suggests that carved gems that were cut into the rectangular shape may have been more expensive, as does the fact that gems cut into this shape tend to be of a high quality. For example, two gems cut into this shape are the chrysoprase with the image of Christ Enthroned in the Vatican and the bloodstone with the image of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa in the Abegg-Stiftung Museum in Riggisberg (nos. 35, 50).[56] Both of these gems are large pieces that were carved with a high degree of technical skill. The bloodstone in the Abegg-Stiftung Museum has the added detail of a carved frame decorated with a scalloped pattern. Carved frames are only present on the largest and most skillfully carved gems, and the bloodstone in the Abegg-Stifgung Museum is the only one of these where the frame is also carved with a decorative motif.

Another Byzantine gem in the rectangular shape that deserves mentioning is the bloodstone with the image of Archangel Michael that is set into an *enkolpion* in the Vatopedi Monastery of Mt. Athos (no. 179).[57] This gem, which dates to the late Byzantine period, is

[55] Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 284, no. 195.

[56] On the chrysoprase of Christ Enthroned in the Vatican, see Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen in den Sammlungen Italiens," 271, table B, no. 3. On the bloodstone of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa in Riggisberg, see S. Trumpler, "Die byzantinische Marienkamee der Abegg-Stiftung in Riggisberg," *Zeitschrift für schweizerische Archäologie und Kunstgeschichte* 43 (1986): 9.

[57] Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 118, no. 40. Measurements were only provided for the *enkolpion* but an image was published that was exactly to scale, and I was able to obtain the measurements of the bloodstone from this image.

notable because it is shaped like the wing of an ivory triptych. Measuring 3.9 cm high by 1.7 cm wide, it is extremely narrow. Rectangular shapes of such narrow dimensions are not found elsewhere in Byzantine glyptics. In addition to its dimensions and shape, this gem is also likened to a side panel of an ivory triptych because of its iconography. The obverse is carved with an image of the Archangel Michael wearing armor and standing with his sword over his right shoulder, and the reverse is carved with roundels within which are images of St. John the Theologian and St. Paul. The iconography of these three holy figures is typical of that found on carved gems; the Archangel Michael as a warrior was a popular theme on Byzantine glyptics and the iconography of the two apostle saints can be traced to carved gems from the late and early eleventh centuries (nos. 3, 4).[58] The placement of the two saints in roundels within a rectangular plaque, however, is not found elsewhere in Byzantine glyptics and instead recalls ivory carving from the middle Byzantine period. It may be that the artist used an ivory panel as a model for the gem's composition and form and carved gems as the models for the figures.[59]

The oval shape can be found among carved gems that date to every century, which is to be expected because this is the most common natural shape for gemstones. Some Byzantine gems in the oval shape, such as the blue chalcedony with the image of St. Nicholas in Vladmir-Suzdal, are wide and shaped almost like rectangles with rounded corners (no. 102).[60] Others, such as the sapphire of Christ Pantokrator in Dumbarton Oaks, are narrow and rounded with a smooth curve that indicates that the gem was subjected to some degree of manual shaping (no.

[58] These carvings of apostle saints are the bloodstone of St. Paul in the Cross Reliquary of Henry II and the bloodstone of St. John the Theologian in the Gospel of Otto III. On these gems see Wentzel, "Kameen," 921.

[59] Loverdou-Tsigarida also draws a comparison between this gem and middle Byzantine ivories. See Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 118.

[60] V. G. Pucko, "Neskol'ko vizantijskich kamej iz drevnerusskich gorodov," *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta* 12 (1970): 129-130, no. 12.

105).[61] By the twelfth century two related shapes appeared, the irregular oval and the teardrop shape. Gemstones in these irregular forms were not manually shaped prior to being carved with images. Examples include the red japer carved with the image of John the Theologian in the Cabinet des Médailles, which is in the shape of a teardrop, and the green jasper carved with the image of the Virgin Orant in the Chilandar Monastery of Mt. Athos, which is shaped as an irregularly formed oval (nos. 171, 164).[62] This indicates that while in the early part of the middle Byzantine period carved gems were almost always cut and formed to achieve a desired shape, over time the natural shape of the stone was increasingly accepted. This correlates directly to changes in workshops and production practices, as irregularly shaped gems also tend to be carved with less artistic and technical skill. Many date to the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries. This reinforces the notion that Byzantine gems of the tenth and eleventh centuries were carved for imperial patrons and other select elites, and that over time there is a greater variation in quality as carved gems became accessible to a wider, although still wealthy, audience.

It is clear, therefore, that carved gemstones that were shaped prior to being carved are of a higher quality and would have cost more. In addition to cost and quality, another factor that impacted the decision of whether or not to shape a gem prior to carving was the type of gemstone itself. Most gems that were shaped as circles, rectangles, or as miniature icon plaques with a rectangular base and an arched top were jaspers and some were also lapis lazuli. Semi-translucent gems such as amethyst, sapphire, and blue chalcedony are almost never shaped into these forms. Instead, they are left in the more natural oval form and, if reshaped at all, they are

[61] Asen, Carder, and Nelson, *Sacred Art, Secular Context,* 59, no. 3.

[62] On the red jasper of St. John the Theologian, see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 287, no. 203. On the green jasper of the Virgin Orant, see Popovich, "An examination of the Chilandar cameos," 19-22, no. 18.

reshaped only to achieve symmetry. One would instinctively assume that a willingness to cut away and waste material would be greater with stones that were less valuable. Jasper was less valuable than semi-translucent stones but lapis lazuli was the most valuable stone of all. Therefore, the differences in the treatment of opaque stones such as jasper and lapis lazuli and semi-translucent stones such as sapphire and amethyst cannot be attributed entirely to value, unless the willingness to carve down lapis lazuli amounts to a sort of conspicuous consumption. The differences in treatment also cannot be attributed entirely to variations in the hardness in stone, because while sapphire is the hardest gemstone, amethyst, blue chalcedony, and jasper are of equal hardness. The reluctance to carve down semi-translucent stones may therefore be attributed to convention or to the fact that they exist naturally in smaller sizes, whereas it is easier to find large jaspers.

Historical Context of Byzantine Gem Carving

This study's precise starting date of 867 was chosen partially because of the traditional chronological divisions that are already established in Byzantine scholarship, and partially because there is a clear break in the techniques, forms, and functions of Byzantine glyptics between the early and middle Byzantine periods.

Although the entire history of Byzantine glyptics is outside of the scope of this study, a brief overview is helpful for an understanding of the ways that middle and late Byzantine carved gemstones differ from those of earlier periods. The evolution of Byzantine glyptics can be traced to changes that developed throughout the early Christian and early Byzantine periods. In the early Christian period, intaglios outnumber cameos and were used as seals that were primarily

functional objects. An inscription or image was incised into the stone in reverse and, when impressed upon hot wax, the image or inscription emerged in relief. By the fourth century the practice of using intaglio gems for sealing declined as lead gradually replaced wax as a sealing medium.[63] Intaglios did not, however, disappear, but became elevated to an art form that was not primarily designed for sealing. Evidence for a functional and aesthetic shift in intaglios over the early Byzantine period includes the fact that the image was no longer reversed, since there was no need for it to stamp an impression in wax, and the fact that rock crystal intaglios were filled with gold so that a striking image seemed to glow in the center of the stone.[64]

The intaglios of the early Byzantine period, no longer used for sealing, took on an amuletic function, albeit in a Christian context. So too did gems carved in relief, which were produced alongside of intaglios in the early Byzantine period but may have been less popular, as today they survive in fewer numbers. The best known are a group of sardonyx cameos, two of which are now housed in the Cabinet des Médailles in Paris.[65] These sardonyxes depict the same iconographic themes that can be found on early Byzantine intaglios, which tend to be multi-figure compositions with a preference for themes that include angels, such as the Adoration of the Cross and the Annunciation. The popularity of angels on early Byzantine cameos and intaglios can even be observed on the well-known amethyst intaglio at Dumbarton Oaks with an image of a standing figure of Christ.[66] Although only Christ is pictured, the inscription invokes

[63] Jeffrey Spier, *Late Antique and Early Christian Gems* (Weisbaden: Reichert, 2007), 1-13.

[64] Genevra Kornbluth, "Early Byzantine Crystals: An Assessment," *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 52/53 (1994/1995): 23.

[65] On the Early Byzantine sardonyx carvings in the Cabinet des Médailles see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 89, nos. 40-41.

[66] On the amethyst intaglio of Christ in Dumbarton Oaks see Asen, Carder, and Nelson, *Sacred Art, Secular Context,* 58, no. 1.

the names of angels and requests divine assistance. With their invocations for divine assistance and depiction of angels who, according to the Solomonic tradition, could defeat demons, the carved gems from the early Byzantine period have strong parallels with amulets in other media from the same period.

During the period of Iconoclasm, carved gems were no longer produced with figural religious imagery. Glyptic production could not have ceased completely, however. This would be at odds with evidence that a class of related objects, cross-shaped phylacteries, proliferated during this period. As small, personal objects, they were one of the few forms of media upon which Iconophiles could keep holy images at a time of Iconoclast hostility.[67] In fact, a number of cross-shaped pectoral pendants survive that are carved from semi-precious stone, and it is very possible that some of these date to the period of Iconoclasm. Several crosses carved from semi-precious stone that are dated to the middle Byzantine period are preserved in the Vatopedi Monastery of Mt. Athos and at the Kremlin Museum.[68] Given their lack of datable iconography it seems reasonable to suggest that they, or similar objects, could have been produced during Iconoclasm. There is no material evidence, however, that gems carved with figural imagery were produced during the period of Iconoclasm. The break provided by Iconoclasm allowed the carved gems that were produced in the centuries that followed to be reinvented with new carving techniques, materials, and iconographic themes. Intaglios all but disappeared and when they were produced they were usually relegated to the status of magical and medical amulets.[69]

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[67] Kartsonis, "Protection Against all Evil: Function, use, and Operation of Byzantine Historiated Phylacteries," 83-86.

[68] Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 46-47, nos. 9 and 10; I. A. Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities: Works of Art from the Fourth to Fifteenth Centuries in the Collection of the Moscow Kremlin Museums* (Moscow: Moscow Kremlin Museums, 2013), 264-265, nos. 57 and 58.

[69] Jeffrey Spier, "Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulets and Their Tradition," *Journal of the Warburg and*

Byzantine Gems in Russia and Western Europe

An overview of the historical context of Byzantine carved gems would not be complete without some remarks on their post-Byzantine existence. Byzantine gems are widely dispersed around Eastern and Western Europe and the United States, and they are housed in a variety of different contexts that include private collections, museums, state coin cabinets, and church treasuries. This is the direct result of the way in which Byzantine carved gems migrated to different corners of Christendom. Many arrived to the West in connection with gifts, but most arrived with the Crusaders, who looted Constantinople in 1204 and returned home with Byzantine treasures that included enamels, gilded chalices, relics, and carved gems. For example, writing in the early thirteenth century, Gunther of Pairis reported that among a hoard of other relics and treasures, an elaborate *enkolpion* set with a Byzantine jasper carved with an the Crucifixion and a large sapphire carved with an image of "the Majesty of God" was taken by Philip of Swabia from Constantinople to the Church of Pairis in Germany. He described the *enkolpion* as:[70]

> …a certain tablet of nearly incalculable value, sumptuously decorated with gold and precious stones (gemmis pretiosts) and containing numerous sorts of holy relics (by far more precious than the gold or gems

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Courtauld Institutes 56 (1993): 57-58, Plate 5. Gems carved in intaglio with a non-magical purpose are rare in the middle Byzantine period, but there are a few examples, including a small bloodstone intaglio carved with an image of the Virgin on Mt. Athos. See Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 74, no. 22.

[70] Gunther of Pairis, *The Capture of Constantinople: the Hystoria Constantinopolitana of Gunther of Pairis*, trans Alfred J. Andrea (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), 130. Cited in Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 14. Latin from Gunther of Pairis, *De expugnatione urbis Constantinopolitane unde, inter alias reliquas, magna pars sancte crucis in Alemanniam est allata; seu, Historia Constantinopolitana*, ed. P. E. D. Riant (Genevae, 1875), 75.

> (gemmis pretiosior)) which had been artfully hidden within it. On solemn feast days the emperor of the Greeks used to wear this tablet on a golden chain hanging from his neck, as a sort of indisputable token of his imperial power. In addition to the gold and the many other gems, a single jasper of amazing size (iaspis unus mire magnitudinis) is set into this tablet. On it is carved the Lord's Passion, and standing on either side are representations of the Blessed Virgin and John the Evangelist. There is also a sapphire (sapphyrus) of amazing weight on which the majesty of God is engraved.

Gunther's account betrays amazement at the size and weight of the carved gemstones. His description calls to mind the large bloodstone with the image of the Crucifixion in the Victoria and Albert Museum (no. 48).[71] Measuring 6.2 cm high, 6.1 cm wide, and 0.9 cm thick, this bloodstone is not only large, but also heavy. Although it is impossible to connect it with the one described in the text, the text does support the assumption that the carved gems that were especially large in size and high in quality would have belonged to Byzantine emperors. The text also clearly demonstrates that Byzantine carved gems were objects of wonder and value to Westerners, who ranked them alongside precious relics and reverently donated them to their own churches.

Byzantine carved gems also circulated around the medieval Mediterranean world in the same way that many small luxury objects did, which is through gift giving, pilgrimage, and travel.[72] For example, it is thought that the Byzantine carved bloodstones in Munich arrived in Germany with the Byzantine princess Theophano, who married Otto II, son of Holy Roman

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[71] Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury,* 86-87 d.

[72] Although she does not discuss Byzantine carved gemstones, Eva Hoffman's "Pathways of Portability" provides an excellent discussion on the circulation of objects in the Medieval Mediterranean. See "Pathways of Portability: Islamic and Christian interchange from the tenth through the twelfth century," *Art History* 24.1 (2001): 17-50. On the topic of the circulation of gifts in the Mediterranean, see also Anthony Cutler, "Gifts and Gift Exchange as Aspects of the Byzantine, Arab, and Related Economies," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 55 (2001): 247-278.

Emperor Otto the Great, in 972.[73] The carved bloodstones, one with an image of St. Paul and the other with an image of St. John the Theologian, are set into two imperial Ottonian holy objects that date to the year 1000 (nos. 3, 4). Other Byzantine carved gems must have migrated throughout the medieval world in a similar fashion and not through looting. The small valuable objects were portable and went easily with their owners as they traveled and moved around Christendom. As jewels, they were appropriate gifts to dignitaries and rulers, who typically exchanged among themselves objects that showcased both monetary value and craftsmanship, such as gem-encrusted ceremonial objects, gilded reliquaries, and silks.[74] A particularly interesting example of semi-precious stones that were given as diplomatic gifts is recorded in the Alexiad of Anna Komnena. Among other luxurious objects, the emperor Alexios I sent to the Western ruler Henry IV chalices of rock crystal and sardonyx and a meteorite bound in gold, perhaps hung on a gold chain like an *enkolpion*.[75] The chalices must have been similar to those currently in the treasury of San Marco, but we have no surviving examples of Byzantine *encolpia*

[73] Hans Wentzel, "Das byzantinische Erbe der ottonischen Kaiser: Hypothesen über den Brautschatz der Theophano," 39-40. For more recent scholarship on the Empress Theophano and her impact on Ottonian art and culture see the collection of articles in *The Empress Theophano: Byzantium and the West at the Turn of the First Millennium,* ed. Adelbert Davids (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), especially Jacqueline Lafontaine-Dosogne, "The art of Byzantium and its relation to Germany in the time of the Empress Theophano," 211-230 and H. Westermann-Angerhausen, "Did Theophano leave her mark on the Ottonian sumptuary arts?" 244-264.

[74] Cutler, "Gifts and Gift Exchange as Aspects of the Byzantine, Arab, and Related Economies," 247-258; Ghādah al Ḥijjāwi al Qaddūmī, *Book of Gifts and Rarities: Selections Compiled in the Fifteenth Century from an Eleventh-Century Manuscript on Gifts and Treasures* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), passim.

[75] "ἀστροπέλεκιν δεδεμένον μετὰ χρυσαφίου…" Greek text with a French translation from Anna Comnena, *Alexiade: Regne de l'empereur Alexis I Comnene (1081-1118)* ed. and trans. B. Leib. (Paris: Les Belles lettres 1937), 135. Anthony Cutler has suggested that the *astropelekos* may be a meteor stone that was hung on a golden chain. See Cutler, "Gifts and Gift Exchange as Aspects of the Byzantine, Arab, and Related Economies," 251n22. A meteorite, which is a piece of a meteor, is small enough to be worn as an *enkolpion*.

with meteor stones.[76] Anna Komnena does not specify whether the stone was carved with an image, but presumably the fact that it came from the heavens made it rare and precious enough to make an impressive diplomatic gift.

In addition to Western Europe, there are also a significant amount of Byzantine carved gemstones in Russia. Many are believed to have arrived in Russia in the fourteenth century during a period of extensive political and ecclesiastical contact between Moscow and Constantinople. Byzantine carved gems were given among other luxury objects as gifts from the Patriarch and the Byzantine emperor to Russian princes and Church officials.[77] Russian pilgrimage to Constantinople in the thirteenth through fifteenth centuries is also well documented, and it is likely that that some of these visitors brought carved gems back with them to Russia.[78]

In early modern Russia, Byzantine carved gems were frequently set into *panagia*, the large, gilded *enkolpia* worn by Orthodox bishops as part of their ceremonial vestments. For example, the elaborate sixteenth-century *panagion* of Pimen is set with a blue chalcedony of Christ Emmanuel that dates to the late twelfth century, as well as with a more modern wooden relief carved with a host of holy figures (no. 110).[79] The popularity of Byzantine gems in the medieval and early modern Russian Church explains why many are today housed in museums and churches in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Pskov, Rostov, Sergiev Posad, and Novgorod. Of

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[76] Buckton, *The Treasury of San Marco,* 129-140 nos. 10 and 11, 165-167 no. 17, 286-291 no. 42.

[77] Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 20-21.

[78] M. Ehrhard, "Le livre du pelerin, d'Antoine de Novgorod," *Romania* 58 (1932): 44-65; George P. Majeska, *Russian Travelers to Constantinople in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1984) throughout, especially 15-198 for translated pilgrim's accounts.

[79] Pucko, "Neskol'ko vizantijskich kamej iz drevnerusskich gorodov," 123, no. 2.

course, because Orthodox art continued to be produced in Russia after the fall of Constantinople and even today, gems continued to be carved in the Byzantine style after 1453, which is the date chosen as the end point for this study.

Chapter Three: Dating Byzantine Gems

One of the most important goals of this dissertation is to date each of the two hundred Byzantine gems that were assembled. Since all of the surviving Byzantine gems have never been examined together as a group, changes in style and iconography that occurred over time have not been thoroughly explored. Likewise, stylistic groupings that may point to particular workshops have been made in a few isolated cases, but not all of them have been identified because all of the pieces have not been looked at together.[1] To address these research goals it is necessary to date the gems, to the extent that it is possible, and to place them in chronological order. This endeavor also gives insight into the rate of survival of Byzantine gems, which makes it possible to draw tentative conclusions regarding their production.

One of the findings that resulted from the process of grouping and dating all of the two hundred Byzantine gems is that carving techniques varied among different types of gemstones. This was largely because of their differences in hardness, density, opacity, and mineral composition.[2] The result is that gems that date to the same period may exhibit different stylistic features because of the different carving techniques that were employed. The observable differences allow for the separation of gems into three groups for the purpose of study and analysis. The first group is made up of carvings of the opaque stones of lapis lazuli, nephrite, serpentine, chrysoprase, and jasper, which includes bloodstone, red jasper, and green jasper. The

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[1] Some work has been done to determine the relationship between carve gems. Alisa Bank has noted several with iconographic and stylistic parallels in Bank, *Prikladnoe Iskusstvo Vizantii*, 115-146. Ljubica Popovich identified a group of gems that are related as a series in "An examination of the Chilandar cameos," 7-49.

[2] The hardness of gemstones and other minerals is measured by the Mohs scale. Sapphire, a variety of corundum, has a score of 9, while jasper, a variety of quartz, has a score of around 7. See Webster and Read, *Gems: their Sources, Descriptions, and Identification*, 78, 221-241.

second group is made up of translucent and semi-translucent stones in shades of blue and purple that include amethyst, sapphire, blue chalcedony, blue quartz, blue agate, and rock crystal. The third group is devoted to layered sardonyxes that were carved to achieve a color contrast between the background and the foreground.

In this chapter the dating method is outlined. The challenges that complicate efforts to date Byzantine gems are then discussed, as are the most important findings that resulted from dating and examining all of the gems together. The subsequent three chapters are organized based upon the three groups outlined above. The opaque group is addressed first, then the semi-translucent group, and last, the sardonyx group. Within each group, the gems are discussed and dated in chronological order. With two hundred gems in this study it isn't possible to discuss the dating for each piece. Therefore, select works are discussed that best represent the gems for every time period. Sub-groups are also identified in which shared stylistic, epigraphic, or iconographic elements suggest that pieces within the sub-group date to the same period. It is my hope that organizing the information in this way will make this study more useful as a reference for those who would like to find information about one particular gemstone type.

Although these groupings presented the best structure for dating Byzantine gems and identifying stylistic sub-groups and workshops among them, they are not perfect. Although stylistic groupings are usually limited to gemstones of one specific type, they may sometimes include one or two gems of another type. For example, there is a sub-group of bloodstones with the image of the Virgin that date to the early twelfth century and can be linked by style, carving technique, iconography, and epigraphy (nos. 71-74 and 163).[3] A sapphire with the image of the

[3] On the bloodstone of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa in Cividale (no. 72), see Gino Fogolari, *Cividale del Friuli* (Bergamo: Istituto italiano d'arti grafiche, 1906), 115-116. On the bloodstone of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa in Dumbarton Oaks (no. 71), see Asen, Carder, and Nelson, *Sacred Art, Secular Context,* 61 no. 6. On the bloodstone of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa in the Catedral de Léon (no.73) see Manuel

Virgin Enthroned in the Kremlin is closely related to this sub-group (no. 75).[4] The bloodstones belong to the first group of gems while the sapphire belongs to the second, however, they are all so closely related that they are likely to come from the same workshop. They are therefore all discussed together in the chapter dedicated to the first group, while the sapphire is also discussed separately in the chapter dedicated to the second group.

It should also be added that iconography will be discussed in the chapters on dating only in so far as it can be used as a dating tool. A more comprehensive discussion of the iconography and subject matter of Byzantine gems is reserved for Chapters Seven and Eight.

Dating Method

Proceeding to methodology, for the task of dating the two hundred gems in this study I began with the method outlined by Hans Wentzel in his article of 1959.[5] Wentzel's method is the best starting point for dating Byzantine gems because it provides a framework on top of which additional dating methods can be layered. Wentzel identified four Byzantine gems that can be dated with reasonable certainty on the basis of their inscriptions and used them as "fixed points" around which other carved gems could be grouped based upon stylistic similarities. The piece that can be dated with the greatest precision and certainty is the large serpentine roundel

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Gómez-Moreno, *Provinca de León (1906-1908)* (Madrid: Ministerio de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, 1925/1926), 282, no. 388. On the bloodstone of the Virgin Enthroned in Berlin (no. 74), see W. F. Volbach, *Mittelalterliche Bildwerke aus Italien und Byzanz* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1930), 125 no. 2737. On the bloodstone of the Virgin Blachernitissa in the Tretyakov Gallery (no. 163), see Natalia Teteriatnikov, "The Image of the Virgin Zoodochos Pege: two questions concerning its origin," in *Images of the Mother of God: Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium,* ed. Maria Vasilake (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 236, no. 19.5.

[4] On the sapphire in the Kremlin (no. 75), see Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 221-223, no. 35.

[5] Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 9-14.

carved with an image of the Virgin Orant in the Victoria and Albert Museum (no. 41). Measuring 17.6 cm in diameter, this circular roundel was larger than all other gems in this study and functionally different, being most likely mounted in an architectural setting instead of being worn as an *enkolpion*.[6] Its material and comparable carving techniques, however, allow for its inclusion in the corpus of Byzantine glyptics and, as one of the few datable carvings, it holds an important place in this study.

The idea that the serpentine roundel was once mounted in an architectural space is supported by the trace of the original metal mount that remains on the reverse. This rusty indentation lies in the center of the roundel and is surrounded by a cursory sketch of a bust figure inscribed with the Greek letter *mu*.[7] The sketch and inscribed letter could be thought of as instructions to guide the positioning of the roundel when it was mounted. As the outline of the figure on the reverse does not correspond exactly to the position of the figure on the obverse, however, it is more likely that this sketch marks the initial planning stages of the composition.

The obverse side of the serpentine roundel is carved with a bust image of the Virgin Orant with her hands held in front of her body. Although the figure of the Virgin is carved in low relief, the forms are softly rounded and modeled to give the impression of plasticity. This is especially apparent in the depiction of the Virgin's face, which is broad and curved to create the impression of youthfulness with full, round cheeks that transition seamlessly to a smooth jaw. Her eyes are carved in relief with an incised pupil and eyelids indicated by a carved rim. Although the Virgin's body and head are carved on the same plane, the Virgin's head seems to stand out in higher relief since the surrounding stone on the upper half of the roundel is carved

[6] Buckton, *Byzantium: Treasures of Byzantine Art and Culture in British Collections*, 158 no. 171; Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury,* 90. For the use of the serpentine roundel as a fixed point, or "Fixpunkt," see Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 10-11.

[7] Buckton, *Byzantium: Treasures of Byzantine Art and Culture in British Collections,* 158, no. 171.

away to form a lower plane. This gives the impression that the Virgin's head is projecting, even though it is not. The subtle drapery folds of the Virgin's garments are created through a series of diagonal incisions of varying depth and width. The edges of these incisions have been smoothed in order to soften their effect. A cap is visible beneath the Virgin's mantle that is ornamented with a zigzag pattern.

The serpentine stone has a natural pattern of angular light green speckles that enlivens the surface of the dark green stone. An incised rim of about 2 cm encircles the entire roundel. Within the rim is carved an inscription that runs clockwise and requests the Virgin's help for the Emperor Nikephoros Botaneiates: Θ(εοτόκε) (Βοή)ΘΕΙ ΝΙΚΗΦΟΡΩ ΦΙΛΟΚΡΙCΤΩ ΔΕCΠΟ(τ)Η ΤΩ ΒΟΤΑΝΕΙΑΤΗ. The word *despotes* precedes the name Botaneiates, and it has therefore been argued that the gem was made between 1078 and 1081, the three years of the Emperor's reign.[8] Although the term *despotes* would lose its imperial designation by the twelfth century, Emperor Nikephoros Botaneiates used it as his official imperial title during his short reign.[9] It appears on most of his imperial seals upon which, notably, the lettering runs in a clockwise circular fashion that mirrors the form of the inscription on the serpentine roundel.[10]

Returning to Wentzel's dating method, the other three Byzantine gems that can be dated through their inscriptions also belonged to emperors. One is a carved bloodstone with an

[8] Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 10-11.

[9] By the twelfth century the term *despotes* was not used to designate the emperor and was used for high-ranking officials or sons of emperors. However, in the eleventh century it could still be used as the Emperor's title. For the history of the term *despotes* see Alexander Kazhdan, "Despotes" in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), accessed November 22, 2013, http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195046526.001.0001/acref-9780195046526-e-1431.

[10] Nesbitt and Oikonomides, *Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks*, vol. 6, 150-155, nos. 85.1-85.12.

inscription with the name Alexios Doukas (no. 118).[11] This bloodstone measures 4 cm in height and has a rectangular form with an arched top. The obverse is carved with a bust image of St. John the Baptist holding a cross-topped staff, and the reverse is carved with a standing figure of St. George clad in military garb. This bloodstone is the only one of all Byzantine carved gems that displays a portrait of its owner, who is shown bending in *proskynesis* before St. George. The figure is identified as Alexios V Doukas, who became emperor in 1204 and was executed in that same tumultuous year of the Fourth Crusade.[12] The bloodstone is now lost, but its image has been preserved through photographs.

The identification of the figure as Emperor Alexios V Doukas requires further comment. The inscription on the gem reads AΛ(E)ΞIOC O Δ(O)YKAC, which translates to "Alexios Doukas." There were several emperors with the name Alexios, but Alexios V is the only one with the surname Doukas. The question is really whether this figure was the Emperor Alexios V Doukas, or whether he was another man with the same name. After all, the surname Doukas was not limited to one family and there are several historical figures with the name Alexios Doukas, none of whom were related to one another. One was Alexios Doukas who served as *doux* of Cyprus in 1160.[13] Little is known about his life, but he is unlikely to have been the owner of the bloodstone since the iconography of the figure of St. George suggests that it was carved in the late twelfth or thirteenth centuries. Two other individuals who merit consideration are Alexios Doukas Komnenos Angelos, who lived during the second half of the twelfth century, and Alexios Doukas Nestogonos, who was governor of Thessaloniki in 1267. On their seals, all of

[11] Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 11-12.

[12] Ibid., 10-11.

[13] Demetrios I. Polemis, *The Doukai: a Contribution to Byzantine Prosopography* (London: Athlone P., 1968), 114-115.

the surnames of these two individuals are fully written out. Therefore, it cannot be determined whether either of them preferred to use only the surname Doukas in a personal context.[14] The last individual to be considered is Alexios Doukas Philanthropenos, who died in 1275. With the title of *megas doux,* he was the highest-ranking naval commander who was also known for leading a successful battle on land to capture a fort in Ochrid. Sources refer to him more frequently as Philanthropenos and less often with the surname Doukas.[15] This makes it unlikely that he should be identified as the figure on the Cini bloodstone, as does his profession as a naval commander. St. George was typically chosen as a patron by high-ranking individuals in the army.

Thus we are left with Alexios V Doukas, who served as emperor for several months in 1204 just before Constantinople was lost to the Crusaders.[16] Little is known about Alexios' life before he ascended to the throne, but since he was instrumental in leading the defense against the Crusaders it is likely that he had a military background. In the years preceding his short reign, he was an influential advisor to Emperor Alexios IV Angelos. In January of 1204, however, during a period of intense hostility between the Byzantines and the Crusaders, Alexios Doukas overthrew Emperor Alexios IV Angelos and had himself crowned Emperor. He spent the brief months of his reign leading military battles against the Crusaders and trying to drive them out of the city. Ultimately, he was unsuccessful, for in April the Crusaders captured Constantinople and Emperor Alexios V Doukas fled the city. By November of the same year he was captured,

[14] Ibid., 88 (for Alexios Doukas Komnenos Angelos) and 151-152 (for Alexios Doukas Nestogonos).

[15] Ibid., 168-169

[16] The biography of Emperor Alexios V Doukas can be found in Benjamin Hendrickx and Corinna Matzukis, "Alexios V Doukas Mourtzouphlos: His Life, Reign, and Death (? - 1204)," *Hellenika* 31 (1979): 108-132.

brought back to Constantinople, and executed by being thrown off of the Column of Theodosius.[17]

Emperor Alexios V Doukas was known by his nickname, Mourtzouphlos, which was given to him because his eyebrows met in the middle of his forehead.[18] The nickname was not flattering and was used most consistently in Western sources, which reflects the bias of his enemies. In the Greek sources however, the chronicles of George Akropolites and Niketas Choniates, he is referred to as Ἀλέξιος ὁ Δούκας, or simply ὁ Δούκας.[19] As the only Alexios Doukas with the name that matches the inscription on the bloodstone and who lived at a time that is appropriate for the iconography of the gem, it can be concluded that he was its owner as well as the figure portrayed. His military background explains his devotion to the St. George, the holy warrior. There is no imperial title in the inscription, and given the brevity of this emperor's reign, it is most likely that the bloodstone dates to the period between the late twelfth century and the early thirteenth century, prior to Alexios Doukas' ascension to the throne in 1204. Another detail in support of this conclusion is the fact that the bloodstone was in Venice until it was lost, and Alexios V Doukas' execution was organized by the Venetian Doge Enrico Dandolo. According to Robert of Clari, Dandolo felt that the typical punishment of death by hanging was not appropriate for a man who had fallen from such great heights, and suggested the idea of throwing him from the Column of Theodosios. "'For a high man,' said the doge, 'high

[17] Ibid., 113-132.

[18] Ibid., 112.

[19] On the use of the nickname "Mourtzouphlos" by the Westerners, see Georgios Akropolites, *George Akropolites: the History*, ed. and trans. R. J. Macrides (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 112n6. On the Greek sources see *Nicetæ Choniatæ Historia*, ed. J.P. Migne (Patrologia Graeca vol. 139) (Paris: Apud Garnier Fratres and J. P. Migne, 1894) 947-996, accessed Sept. 6, 2014, http://phoenix.reltech.org.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/cgi-bin/Ebind2html/Migne/Gk139; Georgius Acropolita, *Georgii Acropolitae Opera I,* ed. August Heisenberg and Theodorus Scutariotes (Leipzig: Teubner, 1903), 7.

justice!'"[20] Given the Venetian role in the execution of Alexios V Doukas, it is easy to understand how his *enkolpion* could migrate to Venice.

With the dating of the Cini bloodstone to the late twelfth or early thirteenth century, it is possible to identify characteristic elements of the carving style of this period, which include forms that are modeled in relief and delineated with confident, linear incisions. This lends the figures an element of abstraction and also ensures that they are clearly defined, a technique that was necessary when working with a dark stone. The figure of St. John the Baptist on the obverse is modeled in relief, whereas the figures of St. George and Alexios V Doukas on the reverse are carved in flatter relief with a more abbreviated carving style. The carving techniques used to render the figures on the reverse may reflect the need to keep the forms flatter and simpler so that the *enkolpion* could lie flush against the body without causing discomfort. These techniques can also be observed on other bloodstones carved in this period, however, regardless of whether they are on the obverse or the reverse.

The other two Byzantine gems identified by Wentzel that can be dated by their inscriptions are both associated with Emperor Leo VI, who reigned from 886 to 912. One is a bloodstone in the Victoria and Albert Museum that is carved with a standing figure of Christ (no. 1).[21] This bloodstone measures 4.8 cm in height and, like the bloodstone in the Cini collection, it is shaped with a rectangular base and an arched top. Christ is represented standing on a footstool with his right arm stretched out in a sling in a gesture of blessing and his left hand holding a gospel book. The reverse is carved with the image of a cross resting on a globe that resembles the *globus cruciger*. The *globus cruciger* was typically held by Byzantine emperors portrayed

[20] Robert of Clari, *The Conquest of Constantinople*, trans. Edgar Holmes McNeal (New York: Octagon Books, 1996), 124. Cited in Polemis, *The Doukai,* 147n1.

[21] Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 12-13; Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury*, 86-87, b.

on coinage as a symbol of imperial authority.[22] An inscription on the reverse reads "Jesus save Leo the Despot."[23] This gems helps to establish a carving style for tenth and early eleventh centuries glyptics that is characterized by high relief, modeled plastic forms, and detailed and naturalistic carving.

The other gem that is associated with Emperor Leo VI is a sardonyx carved with a bust image of the Virgin Orant (no. 2). The reverse is carved with the image of a cross with the inscription "Lord Help Leo the Despot."[24] The sardonyx is now lost, but in 1732 it was housed in the Museo Vittorio in Rome and was published in a drawing during that same year.[25] Since this sardonyx is only known through a drawing, it cannot be used as a fixed point for dating other gems to the tenth century on the basis of carving style.

In addition to identifying the four gems with datable inscriptions as fixed points around which other Byzantine gems can be grouped on the basis of stylistic similarities, Wentzel also demonstrated that Byzantine gems set into reliquaries can be used to date other gems by serving as *terminus ante quem* dates. The best examples are the bloodstones of St. Paul and St. John the Theologian, both set into Ottonian objects that can be dated to around the year 1000 (nos. 3, 4).[26] These bloodstones are instrumental for establishing a stylistic framework around which other gems that date to the late tenth and early eleventh century can be grouped. As another example of the usefulness of this method, there are three bloodstones carved with the image of Christ

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[22] Bellinger and Grierson, *Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection,* vol. 2, no. 1 (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, 1966), 86.

[23] IHCOY CΩCON ΛEONTA ΔECΠO(την)

[24] K(ύρι)E B(οήθει) ΛEO(ν)TI ΔECΠOT

[25] Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 12-13.

[26] Ibid., 19.

Pantokrator that are difficult to date because of their rough and abbreviated carving style. One is in the Louvre, one is in the Vatopedi Monastery of Mount Athos, and one is set into a reliquary crown known as the Elizabeth reliquary, which is housed in the Swedish History Museum in Stockholm (nos. 68-70).[27] Since the Elizabeth reliquary dates to 1235, it supplies a *terminus ante quem* for the whole group.[28] Given the fact that two out of the three gems are in the West, it is likely that they were carved before the looting of Constantinople in 1204. They can therefore be dated to the late twelfth century. Despite their abbreviated carving style, the bloodstones of Christ Pantokrator are similar in form and iconography to the bloodstones of Christ Pantokrator from the late tenth and eleventh centuries. They are most likely twelfth-century copies of older gems.

Wentzel's method provides the best framework for dating Byzantine carved gems. Due to the fact that there are so many gems and among them there are many stylistic variations, however, Wentzel's fixed points alone are not sufficient for dating all two hundred gems in this study. For this reason, following the suggestion of Alisa Bank in her 1978 publication *Prikladnoe Iskusstvo Vizantii*, iconography will also be discussed for the dating of the gems. Bank suggested that the iconography of Byzantine carved gems corresponds well to the iconography of coins and seals, which provide datable reference points.[29] Cyril and Marlia Mango, writing years later in 1990, also recommended that the imagery of lead seals be used as a tool for dating Byzantine carved gems. Not only are lead seals datable, but they also exhibit a

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[27] On the gem in the Louvre see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 439, no. 331. On the gem in the Vatopedi Monastery see Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 80-81, no. 24. On the gem in Stockholm, see Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen," 64, no. 22.

[28] Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 18. On the Elizabeth Reliquary, see Adolph Goldschmidt, "Ein mittelalterliches Reliquiar des Stockholmer Museums," *Jahrbuch der Preuszischen Kunstsammlungen* 40 (1919): 1-16.

[29] Bank, *Prikladnoe Iskusstvo Vizantii,* 118-119.

wide range of iconographic themes with which the images on carved gemstones can be compared.[30]

In addressing the challenge of dating the gems, I took an approach that combined the methods developed by Wentzel, Bank, and the Mangos. Studies on the iconography of major holy figures such as the Virgin and military saints have made it possible to identify the dates at which specific iconographic themes and details emerged, which allows for the establishment of *terminus post quem* dates for a number of gems. For example, the iconographic theme of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa first appears in the eleventh century, which means that gems carved with this image must date at least to, or after, the eleventh century.[31] As another example, the elongated triangular shield of the Crusaders only appears in the iconography of Byzantine warrior saints as early as the mid-twelfth century.[32] Gems carved with images of warrior saints holding shields in this form must therefore be dated to at least the mid-twelfth century or later.

As suggested by Mango and Mango, seals proved to be useful tools for dating Byzantine gems. An important study on the iconography of datable Byzantine lead seals by John Cotsonis provided an excellent starting point for understanding the dates at which certain iconographic themes emerge on seals and when other themes disappear.[33] Catalogues of seals and coins were, in turn, used to locate individual comparative examples.[34]

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[30] Mango and Mango, "Cameos in Byzantium," 69-73.

[31] Sirarpie Der Nersessian, "Two Images of the Virgin in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 14 (1960): 79-80.

[32] Piotr L. Grotowski, *Arms and Armour of the Warrior Saints: Tradition and Innovation in Byzantine Iconography (843-1261)* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 234. The triangular shield should be distinguished from the "kite shaped shield," which is rounded at the top and narrows to a point at the bottom. It appears as early as the eleventh century. Its origins are not known with certainty, but it is known that this type of shield was widely used by both the Byzantines and the Franks. On this type of shield see ibid., 231-233.

[33] John Cotsonis, "The Contribution of Byzantine Lead Seals to the Study of the Cult of the Saints (Sixth-Twelfth Century)," *Byzantion* 75 (2005): 383-497.

Epigraphy was also employed as a dating tool, but it was difficult to employ because Byzantine carved gems rarely have inscriptions other than *nomina sacra.*[35] Therefore, there are very few epigraphic forms to examine. The only resource on Byzantine epigraphy that is of possible assistance for the dating of Byzantine carved gemstones is Nicolas Oikonomides' book on dating Byzantine lead seals. One chapter is devoted to the epigraphy of seals, and it includes a reference table listing datable letter forms.[36] Although this resource is useful insofar as it identifies letter forms that change over time, it must be used with caution for dating Byzantine gems. This is because some letter forms such as *mu*, *delta,* and *omega* that Oikonomides identifies as only appearing in the late thirteenth century on seals can be found earlier on other types of Byzantine art including carved artworks.[37] For example, a delta in the form that Oikonomides had dated to the thirteenth century can be found on a stone incense burner in San

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[34] On Byzantine lead seals see Nesbitt and Oikonomides, *Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks*, 6 vols. and Zacos and Veglery, *Byzantine Lead Seals,* 2 vols. On Byzantine coins, see Bellinger and Grierson, *Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection*. The iconography of coins is less helpful than the iconography of seals for dating Byzantine carved gems. This is not only because they display a more limited range of iconographic themes, but also because the depiction of Christ Pantokrator on Byzantine coins differs from the depiction of Christ Pantokrator on carved gems. The reasons for this difference is explained in Chapter Seven.

[35] Another, greater challenge, is that there is no published epigraphic reference book for Byzantine inscriptions carved on objects. There is a book on Byzantine epigraphy that was published in 1977 by N. K. Moutsopoulos, but it is extremely rare and is not available in any library in the United States. Unfortunately, I was unable to consult it. The publication is as follows: N. K. Moutsopoulos, *Symbole ste morphologia tes hellenikes graphes leukoma Byzantinon kai Metabyzantinon Epigraphon* (Thessaloniki: N. K. Moutsopoulos, 1977). This reference given to me by Dr. Andreas Rhoby.

[36] Nicolas Oikonomides, *A Collection of Dated Byzantine Lead Seals* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1986), 151-164 and table on unnumbered pages that directly follow.

[37] This is the opinion of Dr. Andreas Rhoby, who offered me his thoughts upon using epigraphy as a tool for dating Byzantine gems in an email. According to Dr. Rhoby, Oikonomides' table is of limited use for dating Byzantine gems because the letter forms that he identifies as thirteenth-century forms also appear in the twelfth century as well as the fourteenth century. Dr. Andreas Rhoby, email message, September 23, 2014. Dr. Rhoby is a co-author of an extensive study on Byzantine epigrams that is published in several volume series. See Hörandner, Paul, and Rhoby, *Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung*.

Marco that dates to the eleventh or twelfth centuries.[38] Oikonomides' resource therefore cannot be used to date Byzantine gems with precision.

I have also been able to make some epigraphic observations myself that I have used in dating Byzantine gems. For example, I have noticed that the letter forms on some of the gems that I have dated to the late twelfth through the early thirteenth century are large and loosely formed. I have also observed that gems carved with the image of Christ Pantokrator and Christ Emmanuel that date to this period are inscribed with *nomina sacra* that are formed in such a way that the *sigma* is noticeably smaller than the *chi*. The two letters are also connected, with the *sigma* attached to the arm of the *chi.* From these observations, I've been able to add epigraphy to iconography and stylistic analysis as tools for dating carved gemstones to the late twelfth through the early thirteenth centuries. In general, I've concluded that epigraphy can be used only to decide whether a gem should be dated to the early part of the middle Byzantine period (the tenth and eleventh centuries) or whether it should be placed in the twelfth or thirteenth century. It cannot be used to differentiate, however, between a twelfth or thirteenth century date.

Dating Challenges

Dating Byzantine carved gems is the most challenging aspect of their study, mainly because they almost never survive to the present day with any contextual information.[39] Very

[38] Oikonomides, *A Collection of Dated Byzantine Lead Seals*, entry for *delta* and *omega* on the table. On the incense boat see Buckton, *The Treasury of San Marco,* 292 no. 43. The *delta* is found on the interior of the incense boat as part of the inscription for St. Demetrios, who is pictured within the incense boat. As another example, Oikonomides wrote that the *mu* formed with a straight cross bar only appears as early as the late thirteenth century on seals, but this type of *mu* appears in one of the inscriptions on the serpentine chalice in San Marco, which dates to the twelfth century and was brought to Venice in 1204 during the Fourth Crusade. On the serpentine chalice, see ibid., 286-291, no. 42.

few are inscribed beyond the standard *nomina sacra,* most likely because of their small size and the difficulty of engraving gemstones. Most have lost their original mounts, which may themselves have been datable based upon the style of their metalwork or their inscriptions. The few gems that are still in their original mounts include the double-sided lapis lazuli carved with standing figures of Christ and the Virgin in the Louvre, which is set in a thick silver-gilt frame studded with gemstones, and several gems in the Vatopedi Monastery, which are set into gilded frames rimmed with thin bands of twisted gold wire (nos. 56, 83, 120).[40] The survival of a Western frame with a bloodstone of Christ Pantokrator in the Cabinet des Médailles, which is inscribed with a Latin phrase that declares the bloodstone's efficacy in stopping hemorrhages, suggests that some of the Byzantine frames may have been inscribed (no. 65).[41]

Another challenging aspect of dating Byzantine gems is the fact that they were objects that tended to be reused and passed down from generation to generation. This type of usage preserves older iconographic themes, as artists and patrons were more likely to look to traditional models or to simply copy carved gems that were already in their possession. This may be observed on a bloodstone in the Vatopedi Monastery (no. 179).[42] The bloodstone can easily be dated to the late thirteenth or fourteenth century based upon the iconography of the figure of the Archangel Michael on the obverse. The reverse, however, is carved with images of St. Paul and St. John the Theologian that, in terms of their iconography, closely resemble the depiction of the same saints on two tenth-century bloodstones set into Ottonian objects. Despite their

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[39] Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 9-22.

[40] Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 285, no. 195; Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia*, 44, no. 8, 50, no. 12, 82, no. 25.

[41] Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 282, no. 191.

[42] Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia*, 118-119, no. 40.

iconographic similarities with the tenth-century bloodstone carvings, it is unlikely that the images of St. Paul and St. John the Theologian on the reverse of the Vatopedi bloodstone were carved earlier than the figure of the Archangel Michael on the obverse. Instead, their shared elements of carving style suggest that they are contemporaneous.[43] Therefore, it is likely that the carver looked to carved gems that were centuries old as the prototypes for his renditions of St. Paul and St. John the Theologian.

As a related challenge, the iconography of some themes such as Christ Pantokrator remained constant over the centuries, making it difficult to distinguish between gems that may be hundreds of years apart. For example, the bloodstone of Christ in Kassel displays iconography and a carving style that is typical of bloodstones with the image of Christ Pantokrator from the late tenth and early eleventh centuries (no. 121).[44] Christ is pictured in bust with his right hand held out in a sling in a blessing gesture and his left hand holding a gospel book. The figure is formed in relatively high relief and the halo, instead of being simply incised, is raised above the background plane. A close examination of the Kassel bloodstone, however, suggests that it must be a copy of an older model because there are slight differences in iconography and carving technique that liken it to gems from the twelfth century. For example, Christ's face and beard are long, his head is narrow, and his eyes are blank, without an incised pupil. The carving style is more linear and less naturalistic, which can be observed in the pattern-like representation of Christ's hair. The Kassel bloodstone is best dated to the late twelfth century on the basis of its technical and stylistic similarity to the late twelfth-century bloodstone of Alexios V Doukas in the Cini Collection.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 90, no. 80.

As the example above demonstrates, gems that are not datable based upon their iconography, settings, or epigraphy must be dated based upon their stylistic and technical closeness with other datable gems. It is to be emphasized that although stylistic analysis is used as a dating method in this study, it is employed with caution. It is not a reliable approach and in past studies it has proven to be overly influenced by the notion of period style, with the result that all examples of "good" art were grouped together in the same time period.[45] In this study, carving style is the last of several dating tools to be employed, and is only used when it is clear that two or more gems are so similar in style that they must have been produced with the same carving techniques.

The lack of information surrounding the location at which the gems were produced also complicates efforts to date them. For example, a gem carved in a provincial center might display stylistic or iconographic elements that differ from those produced in the capital, which could lead to an inaccurate dating. In this dissertation it is assumed that most of the gems of the middle Byzantine period were produced in Constantinople, since precious materials were controlled by the state in the tenth century and gemstones were associated with imperial use.[46] It is possible that some gems were produced in a provincial location in the middle Byzantine period, but this cannot be determined with certainty based upon the information that is available. Different levels of workshops existed in the capital, especially in the twelfth century, and it is therefore impossible to know whether a piece of a lower quality is provincial or whether it was produced

[45] The best example is the study on ivories by Weitzmann and Goldschmidt. Weitzmann and Goldschmidt dated nearly all Byzantine ivory plaques to the tenth century. Some of their dating conclusions were challenged by Ioli Kalavrezou. See Adolph Goldschmidt and Kurt Weitzmann, *Die byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen des X. - XIII. Jahrhunderts*, vol. 2 (Berlin: B. Cassirer, 1930-1934), 10-21 and Ioli Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, "Eudokia Makrembolitissa and the Romanos Ivory," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 31 (1977): 305-323.

[46] The tenth-century laws that regulate the sale of precious materials are set forth in the *Book of the Eparch*. See Freshfield, *Roman Law in the Later Roman Empire,* 10-13.

in the capital for a less discerning customer. There is evidence, however, that by the late Byzantine period gem carving had resumed in the capital and had expanded to other urban centers. This finding is discussed in Chapter Four.

Given the challenges outlined above, many gems can be dated with a reasonable degree of confidence, but most cannot be dated with certainty. In the cases in which uncertainty arose surrounding a gem's placement in one particular century, the gem was dated over a period of two centuries in order to avoid making an arbitrary decision to place it in one century instead of the other. The gems that date to the eleventh and twelfth centuries are particularly difficult to distinguish from one another, as certain iconographic themes such as the Virgin Hagiosoritissa and the armored warrior saint developed in the eleventh century and continued to be represented in the twelfth century. Gems that date to the first half of the thirteenth century are also difficult to distinguish from those carved in the late twelfth century. Since we are not certain about the productivity of workshops in Constantinople during the first half of the thirteenth century, this finding seems to suggest that gem carving may have continued elsewhere, in some other urban center, after the capital was captured by the Crusaders. Similarly, some gems display iconographic elements that place them in the second half of the thirteenth century, but they are stylistically and technically similar to gems that date to the late twelfth century. This seems to indicate that when Constantinople was restored to Byzantine control in the mid thirteenth century, gem carving resumed and carvers looked back to the most recently cut gems as their models. It is unlikely that gems continued to be carved by Byzantine artisans for Latin patrons during the early thirteenth century, since in this case one would expect to find a significant shift in iconography and subject matter, as well as carved gems with Latin inscriptions.

Finally, the last challenge involved in dating Byzantine carved gems is that while dating methods and tools provide a framework into which most Byzantine gems can be placed, there are some that cannot easily be placed within this framework. For gems that cannot be placed within the Byzantine stylistic or iconographic repertoire, the question arises as to whether or not they can be considered Byzantine at all.[47] Having outlined the many challenges in dating Byzantine gems, I should emphasize that I would gladly revise my dating conclusions, should new information arise that can date and localize the gems with greater accuracy.

Overview of Findings from Dating Byzantine Gemstones

From the process of examining and dating all of the Byzantine gems that are included in this study, I was able to draw insights into their production, which could be inferred by their rate of survival. I was also able to make observations regarding the relationship of Byzantine carved gems with other carved artworks of the same period, namely, small personal icons of ivory and steatite.

The Dating of Byzantine Gems

It must be acknowledged that the findings from the process of dating the gems in this study only reflect the survival of Byzantine gems. This, coupled with the fact that most Byzantine gems can only be assigned an approximate date, means that their rate of production cannot be accurately measured. Nonetheless, after placing the surviving pieces in a

[47] For example, a bloodstone carved with the image of Christ Pantokrator in the Cabinet des Médailles (Babelon 333) is characteristically Byzantine in material and iconography, but has an unusual facial type (no. 65). See Guillou and Durand, *Byzance*, 282, no. 191.

chronological sequence, it is possible to draw tentative conclusions regarding the time period in which the production of carved gems may have been at its highest.

The production of Byzantine carved gems in the era after Iconoclasm begins in the early tenth century. The two earliest carved gems are the sardonyx and bloodstone that date to the reign of Emperor Leo VI, which were discussed already in connection with Wentzel's dating method. Leo VI was emperor from 886 to 912, but a date in the early tenth century for the two gems is preferred over the late ninth century because the image of the Virgin on the sardonyx can be compared with her image on a coin that dates to between 908 and 912. The figure of Christ on the bloodstone also resembles the figure of Christ on two ivories that belonged to Leo's son, Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennitos, who reigned as a single emperor from 945 to 959.[48]

Within the middle Byzantine period, the rate of survival of Byzantine gems is lowest in the period of the tenth through the early eleventh centuries, into which only twenty pieces can be placed. This seems to suggest that production was limited at this time, but it should also be expected that fewer pieces would survive from the earlier centuries. We can speak of the eleventh century with greater certainty, as thirty-eight pieces can be dated to this period. This number includes only those that date firmly to the eleventh century and does not include those that date to the late eleventh or early twelfth centuries, or those that date to either the eleventh or the twelfth centuries. The survival rate for Byzantine gems is highest in the twelfth century, into which seventy-three gems can be placed. These results regarding the rate of survival of carved

[48] On the coin of Emperor Leo VI with the image of the Virgin Orant see Bellinger and Grierson, *Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection,* vol. 3, pt. 2, 503. The figure of Christ on the bloodstone in the Victoria and Albert Museum can be compared with the figure of Christ on the Palazzo Venezia triptych and the Coronation Ivory of Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos in the Pushkin Museum of Moscow, both of which date to after the year 945. On the coronation ivory of Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos see Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium,* 203, no. 140. On the Palazzo Venezia triptych see Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, "Eudokia Makrembolitissa and the Romanos Ivory," 320-321, no. 15.

gems in the middle Byzantine period suggest that production may have been highest in the twelfth century.

Relatively few gems survive from the late Byzantine period. Only nineteen gems can be dated to the thirteenth and the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries, while twenty-one gems can be dated to the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries. Therefore, from what has survived, it can be surmised that gem production was greater in the middle Byzantine period than the late Byzantine period.

Historical Context of Gem Production in the Twelfth Century

From the increase in the number of surviving pieces that date to the twelfth century, we can assume a greater popularity of the wearing of carved gemstones as *enkolpia* at that time. This, in turn, raises the question of why this was the case. There are several answers to this question, the first of which concerns economics. An increase in production of carved gems in the twelfth century indicates that during the twelfth century more people were able to afford these expensive luxury objects. This may be partially explained by demographic information for Constantinople, which relates that the population expanded greatly in the eleventh and twelfth centuries and that it reached its apex in the twelfth century with 400,000 individuals.[49] A population increase alone may not significantly increase demand for luxury objects, but there is also evidence that the twelfth century was especially favorable for the wealthy due to the initiatives launched by Alexios I Komnenos, who reigned from 1081 to 1118. These initiatives were designed to overcome the fiscal crisis caused by the collapse of the monetary system in the

[49] A. E. Laiou and C. Morrison, *The Byzantine Economy* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007), 131.

late eleventh century. One initiative that especially benefitted the wealthy was a system known as "feudal authoritarianism," in which the right to own land and collect taxes was granted to certain aristocratic families. Aristocrats grew increasingly wealthy and powerful by taxing the peasants and expanding their estates. The state also enjoyed great wealth, and the court of Manuel I Komnenos was especially known for its luxury and riches.[50] Written sources from the eleventh and twelfth centuries also reveal that aristocrats of the period spent their wealth on luxury objects, delighting especially in rich adornments such as silks and gem-encrusted garments.[51] This information indicates that in the twelfth century, wealth was more widespread and the class of people who could have afforded luxury objects such as carved gems expanded. Within this social and economic context, the increase in production of carved gems is not surprising.

The material evidence also indicates that the quality of carved gems in the twelfth century varied greatly. In fact, the quality of Byzantine carved gems varied increasingly over time. Those that were produced in the tenth and early eleventh century were carved from large, high-quality stones with a high degree of technical skill. For example, the large lapis lazuli plaque with the image of Christ Standing in the Kremlin dates to this period (no. 22), as do the circular bloodstones with the image of Christ Pantokrator that are characterized by careful modeling, realistic anatomical features, and high relief (nos. 17-20).[52] In the eleventh century the quality of

[50] Laiou and Morrison, *The Byzantine Economy*, 151-160;

[51] Kazhdan and Wharton, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, 75-76.

[52] On the lapis lazuli plaque in the Kremlin see Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 122, no. 635. The bloodstones of Christ Pantokrator are located in the Cabinet des Médailles, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Vatican Museum, and the University of Pennsylvania Museum. On the bloodstone in the Victoria and Albert Museum see Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury,* 86-87, c. On the bloodstone in the Vatican see Righetti, "Le opere di Glittica dei Musei Annessi alla Biblioteca Vaticana," 332-333, table V,

carved gems remains high, although there are several small jasper carvings such as the bloodstone of the Virgin Orant in the Milliken Collection and the bloodstone of John the Baptist in s'Gravenhage that were wrought with less technical skill (nos. 44, 76).[53] To the eleventh century also belong a number of bloodstones carved with a notably abbreviated carving style. They are not low in quality and, in fact, their linear, undisguised incisions make the figures stand out and lend them an abstract quality that appears to be intentional. These works would have been easier and faster to carve, which may have made them more affordable. By the twelfth century, there is a noticeable variation in the quality of carved gems. Large, carefully modeled works from high quality and expensive stones continued to be carved, such as the double-sided lapis lazuli in the Louvre (no. 56).[54] There are also a number of gems, however, mainly jaspers, that are rendered in an abbreviated manner with simple forms wrought through linear incisions and very little plastic modeling. They do not appear to be intentionally abstracted. Instead, they appear to have been quickly made, as the incisions are imprecise and the inscriptions are formed with loose, uneven letters. Examples include a bloodstone in the British Museum with the Virgin Orant and a bloodstone of the prophet Daniel in the Cabinet des Médailles (nos. 159, 160).[55] The bloodstones of the Virgin and the prophet Daniel have identical silhouettes and differ only in the positioning of the hands and, only slightly, in their facial features. This has

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no. 1. On the bloodstone in the University of Pennsylvania Museum see Popovich, "A Byzantine Cameo," 28-33. On the bloodstone in the Cabinet des Médailles see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 281, no. 190.

[53] On the jasper carving of the Virgin in the Milliken Collection see Wentzel, "Kameen," vol. 3, 917. On the bloodstone of John the Baptist in s'Gravenhage see Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 96n89, no. 89.

[54] Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 284, no. 195.

[55] On the bloodstone with the Virgin Orant see Dalton, *Catalogue of the Engraved Gems of the Post-Classical Periods in the Department of British and Mediaeval Antiquities,* 3, no. 11. On the bloodstone of the prophet Daniel see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 438-439, no. 330.

caused the Virgin to have an oddly shaped, pointed head that, when carved as a Daniel, becomes the Phrygian hat. This comparison hints at a type of "mass production," in which a workshop may have carved silhouettes onto gems that could then be quickly customized to the holy figure preferred by the patron.

The lower quality of some twelfth-century gems suggests that carved gems were made more accessible to a wider range of people in that period. It was not only that more people were able to afford carved gems, but also that the carved gems themselves were made more affordable. Although they were still luxury objects and would have been expensive, a wider range of individuals could have purchased them. Looking at the quality range of carved gems from the tenth through twelfth centuries, it can be concluded that in tenth century carved gems were owned mainly by emperors and were probably carved in imperial workshops. In the eighth through tenth centuries, precious materials were tightly controlled by laws set forth in the *Book of the Eparch.*[56] It is thought that the production of luxury objects such as jewelry and royal textiles was under imperial control as well during this time, and was carried out in imperial workshops that were located in the vicinity of the palace.[57] There are no sources that refer specifically to workshops that would have carved precious materials such as ivory, gemstones, and steatite, but it is very likely that they were also under imperial control or, at the very least, were patronized by a limited and elite clientele. Over the eleventh and twelfth centuries, carved gems continued to be produced for emperors and other high-ranking individuals such as patriarchs and aristocats. These gems were carved with a high level of technical skill and from stones that are distinguished in some way, either by their large size or high quality, or because they were especially precious, such as lapis lazuli. However, by the twelfth century production

[56] Freshfield, *Roman Law in the Later Roman Empire*, 10-13.

[57] Laiou and Morrison, *The Byzantine Economy,* 74.

had expanded and other workshops must have emerged that produced the smaller, quickly carved jaspers that were more accessible.

This leads to the question of why there was an increase in demand for carved gemstone *enkolpia* in the twelfth century. It must be remembered that although gemstone *enkolpia* are luxury objects, they are not jewelry. Therefore, to understand the increased demand for carved gems it is also necessary to look at the religious practices of the late eleventh and twelfth centuries. This period is characterized by an emphasis upon individual piety, which manifested itself in various ways. One of these was the practice of collecting relics, which became more widespread in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries because it was understood as a way to form a personal connection with a favorite saint. Miraculous images that were related to relics, such as the Mandylion of Christ, were reproduced on a variety of different types of media and venerated.[58] The late eleventh and twelfth centuries are also characterized by other developments that speak to the expansion of holy images, including the emergence of miraculous images such as the Blachernai icon of the Usual Miracle, the use of icon panels in processions and liturgical services, and the increased popularity of new genres of images such as the narrative scenes of the Twelve Feasts. These new image types were used in devotional practices that spanned both public and private spheres.[59] With the shift towards individual piety and the increased use of holy images and personal devotional objects in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries, it is easy to understand why the production of gemstone *enkolpia*, a type of personal "icon," would also increase during this time.

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[58] Kazhdan and Wharton, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, 95-97.

[59] Ibid., 97; Belting, *Likeness and Presence,* 225-260 (on new image types and their use in liturgy and private devotion) and 261-296 (on new visual devices in icons that parallel concurrent developments in rhetoric); Bissera Pentcheva, "Rhetorical Images of the Virgin: the Icon of the 'Usual Miracle' at the Blachernae," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 28 (Autumn, 2000): 45-54.

The Relationship between Carved Gems and Carved Icons in Ivory and Steatite

The final observations that emerged from the process of examining all Byzantine gems together as a group concerns their relationship with carved icons in ivory and steatite. It was noted already that the two earliest examples of Byzantine carved gems that have survived date to the tenth century and are associated with the reign of Emperor Leo VI. Scholars have also identified the tenth century as the time at which ivory and steatite carving emerged in Constantinople after Iconoclasm. The two earliest steatites, both of which are icon plaques with the image of the *Koimesis*, date to this period, as do a number of carved ivories that are associated with the imperial court.[60] Carvings in gemstone, ivory, and steatite are all from the same aesthetic context in which, in the first centuries following Iconoclasm, relief icons were preferred over flat, painted icons and were produced in many types of media. These materials had not been used for the carving of iconic portraits before Iconoclasm, although ivories and gemstones had sometimes been carved with religious subject matter. Ioli Kalavrezou has argued that after Iconoclasm, ivory and steatite were gradually introduced as a medium for icons and that changes in carving techniques reflect an evolution of attitudes regarding the acceptability of relief sculpture for religious icons.[61] Carved gemstones should be added to ivories and steatites

[60] Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 34-37; Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen des 10 - 13 Jahrhunderts,* 14-20.

[61] Ioli Kalavrezou, "A New Type of Icons: Ivories and Steatites in the Tenth Century," in *Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus and his Age*, ed. A. Markopoulos (Athens: Eurōpaïko Politistiko Kentro Delphō, 1989), 377-396. Bissera Pentcheva has written about the emergence of relief icons in enamel and precious metal after Iconoclasm, arguing that such relief icons were produced in lieu of painted panels because of the tactile model of Byzantine vision. According to Pentcheva, the eye, roaming over glittering, precious surfaces, "touched" the holy figures depicted. The raised, uneven surfaces of the icon were thought capable of leaving an impression of the eyes and soul of the pious observer, much as a die imprinted a

as works that speak to the increased popularity of relief icons carved from precious materials in the middle Byzantine period.

The close examination of carved gemstones confirms that they share some iconographic and stylistic elements with carved relief icons in ivory and steatite. This finding is significant for it suggests that carved gemstones, long overlooked in scholarship, have a place alongside of icons in ivory and steatite, which are some of the most well-known works of Byzantine art. The relationship between Byzantine carved gemstones and relief icons in ivory and steatite, however, is complicated. Kurt Weitzmann and Adolph Goldschmit, who wrote the canonical corpus of ivory icons, dated almost all of the middle Byzantine ivories to the tenth century based on their style and iconography.[62] Ioli Kalavrezou, who published the corpus of steatite icons, demonstrated that carved steatites and ivories are related and argued that some Byzantine ivories that Weitzmann and Goldschmidt had dated to the tenth century probably date to later centuries.[63] Since the dating schema for Byzantine ivories put forth by Weitzmann and Goldschmidt has been challenged, a full assessment of the relationship of Byzantine carved gems with ivory and steatite icons would ideally draw upon on a revised study of Byzantine ivories. However, since one is not available, I have drawn upon Kalavrezou's insights on the common developments in ivory and steatite over the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries in order to

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seal. See Bissera Pentcheva, "Miraculous Icons: Medium, Imagination, and Presence," in *The Cult of the Mother of God in Byzantium: Texts and Images,* ed. Leslie Brubaker and Mary Cunningham (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 266-271; Pentcheva, *The Sensual Icon,* 184-191.

[62] Weitzmann and Goldschmidt, *Die Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen,* 10-21. Weitzmann and Goldschmidt placed almost all examples of Byzantine ivories in the tenth century, but this view was challenged in favor of greater chronological dispersal over the eleventh through fourteenth centuries by Kalavrezou in "Eudokia and the Romanos Ivory," 305-323.

[63] Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 17-32.

understand the extent to which Byzantine carved gemstones developed alongside of these other types of relief sculpture.

Kalavrezou pointed out a number of characteristics of ivory and steatite icons that are important in assessing their relationship with gemstone icons. First, ivory and steatite could be obtained in large pieces, so they were usually shaped into large, thin, plaques before they were carved. Their large format allowed them to be carved with narrative scenes and details such as decorative baldachins and framing columns that would be impossible to depict on the small format of a gemstone. Carvers working in ivory and steatite could also create plastic modeling and details with greater ease, as ivory and steatite are soft relative to gemstones and easier to carve.[64] Gemstones, in contrast, are so hard that plastic modeling and decorative details are achieved with great effort by means of grinding agents and rotating drills. These fundamental differences between the materials of gemstone cameos and ivory and steatite icons call into question the extent to which they developed side by side over the centuries.

The visual evidence, however, reveals clear similarities among Byzantine carved gems of the tenth and early eleventh centuries and ivory and steatite icons of the same period both in terms of their carving style as well as their iconography. For example, the figure of Christ Standing on the bloodstone that belonged to Emperor Leo VI in the Victoria and Albert Museum can be compared with the standing figure of Christ on the ivory Palazzo Venezia triptych of the mid tenth century (no. 1).[65] The carving style of both reliefs is similar as strong plastic modeling is employed and the entire figure of Christ is carved in high relief. Even the halos emerge in

[64] Steatite has a score of 1.0 to 1.5 on the Mohs scale, and ivory has a score of 2.25. Most of the gemstones that were used for carving in Byzantium, however, score between 7 and 9 on the Mohs scale. On the Mohs scores of steatite and ivory see Ibid., 19. For the Mohs score of quartz and its varieties see Webster and Read, *Gems: Their Sources, Descriptions, and Identification*, 221.

[65] On the bloodstone of Christ see Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury*, 86-87, b. On the Palazzo Venezia triptych see Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, "Eudokia Makrembolitissa and the Romanos Ivory," 320-321, no. 15.

relief instead of being simply incised, and the figures' heads are slightly undercut to give them a statuesque quality. The bloodstone and the ivory also share the same iconographic image of Christ. On both works Christ stands frontally in a *contrapposto* stance with his left knee bent and projecting outward. An oval shape is carved over the knee to indicate that it is bent beneath the garments. Christ's face is oval shaped and his hair and beard are rendered naturalistically. He supports the gospel book from below in his left hand and holds his right hand out in a blessing gesture, with his garments stretching out like a sling. As another iconographic parallel, on both works Christ's halo and the gospel book are decorated with pearls, an ornamental motif that appears frequently on tenth-century ivories. With carefully carved details, correct anatomical proportions, and plastic modeling, the carved bloodstone and the ivory triptych are both of the highest quality, which is to be expected since both belonged to individuals from the same imperial family. The Palazzo Venezia triptych belonged to Emperor Leo VI's son, Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennitos.

Two tenth-century gems with the image of St. George and Demetrios also display close similarities with steatite and ivory carvings of the tenth century. One, a blue chalcedony, is in the Hermitage Museum and the other, a purple amethyst, is in the Museum of London (nos. 8, 9).[66] The two oval-shaped gems are nearly identical, except that on the blue chalcedony St. George is placed on the viewer's left and on the purple amethyst the saints' positions are reversed and St. George is placed to the viewer's right. Otherwise, the depiction of the saints is exactly the same on both gems. They stand side by side and, dressed in *chlamys* robes that fasten with a circular clasp and holding crosses in their right hands, they are represented as martyrs instead of as warriors. This mode of representation was more common in the tenth century, after

[66] On the blue chalcedony see Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 179. On the amethyst see Hazel Forsyth, *The Cheapside Hoard: London's Lost Jewels* (London: Philip Wilson Publishers, 2013), 179.

which time martyred warrior saints were usually represented in military garb. This iconographic shift has been attributed to increased cultural awareness of the military due to constant warfare.[67] The two gems are comparable to carved ivories and steatites of the tenth century because of their figure style. The roundness of the figures' faces, their full, bulging cheeks, and eyes framed by thick eyelids invites a comparison with the figures of angels and apostles in the *Koimesis* ivory in the Metropolitan Museum and the steatite representing the same subject in the in the Kunsthistorisches Museum.[68]

The amethyst and blue chalcedony are the only two semi-translucent gems that date to the tenth century, as well as the only two semi-translucent gems to display stylistic and technical parallels with carved ivories and steatites. By the eleventh and twelfth centuries, carved amethysts, sapphires, and blue chalcedonies have an entirely different figure style that is characterized by slim figures with slender heads, long necks, and black, almond shaped eyes. With few exceptions, they do not display significant similarities with carved ivories and steatites again, nor do carved sardonyxes that post-date the tenth century. It is only carvings of the opaque stones of lapis lazuli and jasper that continue to display parallels with ivory and steatite carving throughout the eleventh century and into the early twelfth century. The similarities cannot be observed in all carved jasper and lapis lazuli stones, but are present only in a select few, all of which are of very high quality and many of which are larger than average.

For example, the lapis lazuli plaque of Christ Standing in the Kremlin that dates to the early eleventh century can be compared with carved ivories of the same period (no. 22). It is

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[67] Monica White, *Military Saints in Byzantium and Rus, 900-1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 85-92; Cotsonis, "Byzantine Lead Seals and the Cult of the Saints," 470-471; Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 63-65; Pencheva, *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium,* 85-86.

[68] On the ivory and steatite carvings of the *Koimesis,* both of which date to the tenth century, see Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium,* 154-156, nos. 101-102.

large, measuring 11.8 cm in height, and has a rectangular base and an arched top. It is carved with an image of Christ standing on a footstool and holding his right arm out to the side in a blessing gesture. Although plastic modeling is used to form anatomical details and garments, the relief is relatively flat, the figure's head is not undercut, and the halo is simply incised, instead of carved in three dimensions. The carving is typical the style of eleventh-century ivory carving, which is characterized by a slight flattening of the high relief and strong plastic forms of the tenth century as well as a slight elongation of the figures that accentuates their elegance and statuesque quality.[69] The lapis lazuli plaque was very likely carved in an imperial workshop of the eleventh century that also produced carved icon plaques in ivory and steatite. Given the high value of large pieces of lapis lazuli and the symbol that resembles the *globus cruciger* on the reverse, it can be assumed that it belonged to an emperor.

To understand the stylistic similarities between carved gems and ivory and steatite icons of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, it is necessary to review the observations on the stylistic developments of steatites from this period that were outlined by Ioli Kalavrezou. Kalavrezou, questioning Weitzmann and Godschmidt's dating scheme for ivories in which most icon plaques were placed in the tenth century, suggested that the stylistic developments observed in steatite probably also hold true for ivories of the same period.[70] Kalavrezou found that steatites of the eleventh and twelfth centuries are carved in lower relief because steatites carved in low relief were less likely to crack. She observed that modeling was still suggested by rounding forms, but that overall the relief is mostly kept on the same plane and there is less plastic modeling. Further, carvers made fewer deep incisions because these were likely to cause cracks, with the

[69] Kalavrezou, "Eudokia and the Romanos Ivory," 321.

[70] On re-dating some ivory carvings to the eleventh century see Kalavrezou, "Eudokia and the Romanos Ivory," 323-325, On the co-current development of carving in ivory and steatite see Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 34-37.

result that the carved figures were slightly more abbreviated. Sometimes carvers made up for the lack of deep cuts by carving decorative details with shallow incisions.[71]

Some of the stylistic characteristics of steatites of the eleventh and twelfth centuries can also be observed in some of the carved gemstones from the opaque group of jasper and lapis lazuli carvings that also date to this period. For example, there is a group of bloodstones and green jaspers that date to the eleventh century that are characterized by relief of medium height that is mostly contained to a single plane and forms that are softly rounded to compensate for limited plastic modeling. Gems of this group are anchored by an imperial piece, the serpentine roundel with the Virgin Orant that belonged to Nikephoros Botaniates (no. 41). Several display an image of the Virgin Orant and two are carved with an image of the Archangel Michael. The bloodstone with the image of the standing Virgin Orant in Dumbarton Oaks may serve as an example (no. 42).[72] It is oval in shape and relatively large, measuring 6.1 cm in height. The standing figure of the Virgin fills the narrow compositional space. She is represented standing on a platform, but no attempt has been made to depict it in three-dimensions and it appears rather flat. The sense of flatness extends to the entire figure, as it is carved in low relief, especially for the lower half of the Virgin's body. When viewed from the side, however, the figure gradually protrudes in higher relief, following the curve of the gem, until the Virgin's head emerges in highest relief. Her head does not project, however, in the same strong way that can be observed in carved gems from the tenth and early eleventh centuries. Despite the low relief of the carving, the soft roundness of the forms gives the impression of plastic modeling in higher relief. This is especially visible in the treatment of the Virgin's cheeks and lower jaw, which is round and full and slightly undercut so that a shadow is produced beneath the Virgin's chin. With low relief

[71] Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite*, 38-39.

[72] Asen, Carder, and Nelson, *Sacred Art, Secular Context,* 60, no. 4.

and rounded forms, carved gems within this group can be compared with carved steatites of the eleventh century. Given their high quality and the fact that one piece from the group belonged to an emperor, these gems can be upheld as examples in which an effort was made to work in a carving style that was consistent with other carvings in precious materials from the same period. This may speak to common workshops or simply to the fact that these gems and steatites were produced for a common class of high-ranking patrons who had similar expectations for the luxury objects that they commissioned.

Carved gems often display a closeness with ivory and steatite icons in terms of their iconography. For example, the image of St. Nicholas carved from green jasper in the Musée des Beaux Arts in Lyon compares closely with the rendition of the same saint on the ivory Harbaville Triptych and on several steatites in the Cabinet des Médailles and St. Catherine's Monastery on Mt. Sinai (no. 14).[73] In all of these examples, St. Nicholas is represented with a long Bishop's robe that falls in straight folds and completely obscures his body, as well as an *omophorion,* the bishop's vestment that is ornamented with crosses. On the gemstone and the steatites some additional decorative elements are present on the saint's garments. For example, a patterned stole, the *orarion,* is visible beneath the saint's robes. The iconographic similarity among these works, however, also reflects the fact that the iconography of St. Nicholas was fixed by this period. The saint is rendered in a similar manner on a micromosaic icon from the twelfth century in the Monastery of St. John on Patmos.[74]

[73] On the steatites see Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite*, 105-106, nos. 13 and 14. On the Harbaville triptych see Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium,* 133, no. 80. On the bloodstone of St. Nicholas in Lyon see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 279, no. 187.

[74] Edmund C. Ryder, *Micromosaic Icons of the Late Byzantine Period* (Ph.D. diss., New York University, Institute of Fine Arts, 2007), 26-28, plate 1.6

There are also some jasper and lapis lazuli carvings that date to the late eleventh or early twelfth century that share stylistic similarities with steatites from the same period. Kalavrezou observed that many steatites of the eleventh and twelfth centuries are carved in relief that is almost flat. Steatites were carved in this way so that weight is evenly distributed and breakage of the soft stone would be less likely.[75] Gems that display a similar carving style include the red jasper of the Virgin Orant in the British Museum and the double-sided lapis lazuli in the Louvre (nos. 51, 56).[76] These gems are carved in such low relief that the figure is confined on a low plane that is sunk beneath a raised, carved stone frame. For example, the red jasper of the Virgin Orant in the British Museum is cut to be very thin, measuring 6.4 cm in height but only 0.6 cm in thickness. A carved frame is raised slightly above the background surface of the gem. The figure is carved in very low relief that does not extend beyond the height of the carved frame. Perhaps in order to ensure that the ethereal figure of the Virgin remained accessible, her footstool extends beyond the boundary of the frame and gives the impression that she has entered into the viewer's space. Despite being carved in very low relief, the figure is rendered naturalistically through some limited plastic modeling as well as through curved lines and rounded forms.

The stylistic parallels between some of the large, finely wrought carved gemstones from the eleventh and twelfth centuries and the ivory and steatite icons of the same period may indicate that they were carved in the same workshops. However, it is also possible that their commonalities developed out of a shared aesthetic, since carved gemstones and icons in ivory and steatite were produced for the same class of aristocratic and imperial patrons. In fact, by the

[75] Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite*, 38.

[76] On the red jasper in the British Museum see Buckton, *Byzantium: Treasures of Byzantine Art and Culture from British Collections*, 158-159, no. 172. On the lapis carving in the Louvre see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance*, 284, no. 195.

twelfth century, most carved gemstones display very few stylistic and technical similarities with steatite and ivory icons. This indicates that while gem carving emerged alongside of carving in ivory and steatite in the tenth century, by the twelfth century carving conventions had developed for gemstones that were specific to their media and were influenced by factors such as size, material properties such as hardness, and function.

For example, as noted already, the flat relief and rounded forms that are characteristic of carved steatites from the eleventh and twelfth centuries were necessary in order to prevent breakage of the soft stone.[77] In contrast, the hard nature of the material of gemstone means that carved gemstones are not in danger of breaking, although their surfaces do wear down when they are worn as *enkolpia.* This occurs because they rub against the garments underneath which they are worn. Gemstones, therefore, do not need to be carved in low relief, and it may even be suggested that low relief presents the risk that the image may be more quickly rubbed down. This may explain why, by the late twelfth century, some bloodstones are carved so that the heads of the figures emerge in high relief and the forms are rendered with a high degree of plasticity. Such bloodstones include those carved with the images of St. John the Theologian, St. Theodore, and Christ Pantokrator in the Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel (nos. 121, 123, 124).[78] Epigraphic forms, such as the shape of the omega in the inscription of St. Theodore, place these gems in the late twelfth century, as does their stylistic similarity with the late twelfth-century bloodstone with St. John the Baptist and St. George in the Cini Collection that belonged to Alexios V Doukas (no. 118).[79] Gems from the semi-translucent group that date to the eleventh through the twelfth century are also carved so that the heads of figures emerge in high relief,

[77] Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite*, 38.

[78] Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 90-91, nos. 80, 85, 86.

[79] Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 10-12, nos. 2 and 3.

which suggests that this element of carving style was not unique to carvings of bloodstones, but was instead part of the broader stylistic repertoire for gemstone *enkolpia* of the middle Byzantine period. This example demonstrates that observations about the carving style of one type of medium cannot necessarily be transferred to another type that does not share the same material qualities and function.

The hardness of the material of gemstone inspired other stylistic characteristics that are specific to carved gemstones. For example, many jaspers of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, such as the bloodstone of Christ in the British Museum, are carved with linear, undisguised lines that give the work a sense of abstraction (no. 26).[80] This appears to be deliberate, for the compositions remain balanced and the figures remain well formed and proportional. For these works it is evident the hardness of the stone inspired a shift towards a more linear, abstract style. The fact that this carving technique appears most often on dark, opaque stones also suggest that it was designed to make the figure stand out more noticeably, as undisguised incisions are more visible on dark stone.

This discussion on the stylistic parallels between carved gemstones and carved icons in ivory and steatite has concentrated on works from the middle Byzantine period because few comparisons can be made with gems dating to the late Byzantine period. There are relatively few carved gems that date to the late Byzantine period and they are stylistically isolated, making it difficult to draw conclusions about their relationship with other reliefs from the same period.

[80] Dalton, *Catalogue of the Engraved Gems of the Post-Classical Periods in the Department of British and Mediaeval Antiquities,* 2, no. 8.

Chapter Four: The Opaque Group

This chapter focuses on the dating of Byzantine carved gemstones in the opaque group, which includes lapis lazuli, jasper, nephrite, chrysoprase, and serpentine.[1] Of the three groups established for the purpose of dating and analysis, the opaque group is the largest. It is comprised of one hundred and thirty-two carved gemstones, most of which are varieties of jasper such as bloodstone, red jasper, and green jasper. The carved gemstones of the opaque group can be dated from the tenth through the fifteenth centuries. Carved jaspers can be found in every century, while all but one carving in lapis lazuli date to the middle Byzantine period. There are several nephrite carvings that date to the middle Byzantine period, but most belong to the late Byzantine period. The nephrite carvings from the late Byzantine period are also of a different, lighter color than those of the middle Byzantine period, which suggests that a new type of nephrite stone became popular during that time.

Gems within the opaque group share formal, stylistic, and technical characteristics that justify their inclusion together for the purpose of study. Many are also larger than the average *enkolpion*, because jasper, lapis lazuli, nephrite, and serpentine can be obtained in relatively large pieces. This is worth noting because the size of a gemstone impacts its carvings style and iconography. Larger stones tend to be carved with more complex compositions and after a style that is characteristic of larger relief icons in other media. Some of the gems that measure over 4 cm in height are shaped to look like an icon plaque, with a rectangular base and an arched top. Some are also carved with frames that imitate the silver gilt frames of larger icons in other media.

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[1] These gems were grouped together because they are of a similar density and opacity.

Since the opaque group contains pieces that span a period of over four hundred years, a variety of carving techniques can be observed among them. Most of the variations in carving technique can be attributed to stylistic changes that occurred over time. Although carved gems that date to the same time period tend to be stylistically similar to one another, it is difficult to trace their stylistic developments in a smooth trajectory because variables such as size, format, and subject matter impact carving style. Larger pieces tend to be carved differently than smaller pieces, and portraits are carved differently than narrative scenes. One notable characteristic of many of the gems of the opaque group is that they are carved with techniques that define the figure clearly in the dark and opaque material. On some pieces, the figures and their features are starkly outlined with incisions that have not been smoothed. On others, the heads of the figures are carved in high relief.

In the following discussion the dating of gems within the opaque group is explained following chronological order. The gems have been organized into sub-groups of pieces that share technical and stylistic similarities and can be dated to the same period. It was not possible to identify sub-groups for the gems of the late Byzantine period because there are fewer of them and they tend to be stylistically isolated. The dating of the late Byzantine gems from the opaque group therefore centers upon select examples that demonstrate how they can be dated on the basis of iconographic and stylistic comparisons with works in other media from the late Byzantine period.

The Middle Byzantine Period

The first sub-group of gems from the opaque group to be discussed is made up of those that date from the tenth century through the early eleventh century. The gems that can be placed within this date range have been considered together as a sub-group for several reasons. First, there are only six gems in the opaque group that date to the tenth century and of these, only three survive to the present day. With so few pieces, it is difficult to identify a carving style that characterizes them. More importantly, gems from the tenth and early eleventh centuries share stylistic and technical elements, which seems to indicate that there was no significant stylistic shift that occurred during this period. Many of these gems also display iconographic elements that could place them in either century, making it difficult to produce a strong argument for placing them in one century instead of the other. For these reasons, gems from the tenth through the early eleventh centuries have been considered together as a sub-group.

The oldest gem in the opaque group is the bloodstone with the image of Christ Standing that belonged to Emperor Leo VI and is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum (no. 1).[2] As noted in Chapter Three, this early tenth-century bloodstone is firmly dated on the basis of its inscription, which names Emperor Leo VI as its owner.[3] As a datable gem, this work is important in defining the carving style that can be observed on many of the gems in the opaque group that date from the tenth century through the early eleventh century. This style is characterized by relief that ranges in height from medium to high, well-modeled and detailed plastic forms, and the rendering of the figures' heads in high relief so that they seem to project with greater three-dimensionality than the rest of the figure. The gems that display these stylistic

[2] Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury,* 86-87, b.

[3] Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 12-13.

characteristics most closely are carved with the image of Christ, while gems that represent saints tend to be carved in lower relief and with forms that are less three-dimensional.

The bloodstone of Emperor Leo VI is larger than average.[4] It is shared like an icon, with a rectangular base and an arched top. The stone is of a very high quality, with a deep red hue that blends gradually into green at the edges of the stone. The composition was planned so that the figure of Christ is carved from the red stone. Christ is represented standing on a footstool in a *contrapposto* pose. He stretches his right arm out in a sling with his hand held in a blessing gesture. He holds a gospel book from below with his left hand. The figure of Christ is carved in high relief with the head projecting slightly and the halo carved in relief. The undercutting of the head enhances the figure's statuesque and three-dimensional quality, as does the carving of the footstool so that the front and the side are visible.[5] Christ's garments are modeled to appear as if they are falling in soft folds. His face, hair, and beard are naturalistically rendered through plastic modeling. There is a high level of detail in the carving overall, which is especially noticeable in the decoration of the gospel book and the cross nimbus with the pearl motif. This motif is also found on Byzantine ivories of the same period.

Another gem that dates to the tenth century is a green jasper with the image of Christ Enthroned in the Vatican Museum (no. 10).[6] This small, circular gem measures only 1.9 cm in diameter. It can be dated on the basis of its iconography. Christ is pictured seated upon a lyre-backed throne with his right hand held to the side in a blessing gesture and his left hand

[4] The bloodstone of Leo VI measures 4.8 cm. The average size of the gems in this study is 3.7 cm.

[5] On ivory carving the undercutting of heads is a technique that is intended to accentuate the impression of three-dimensionality. This technique is found on some Byzantine ivories of the tenth century. See Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, "Eudokia Makrembolitissa and the Romanos Ivory," 320.

[6] Inv. no. Vat. 816. See Righetti, "Le opere di Glittica dei Musei Annessi alla Biblioteca Vaticana," 335, table IX, no. 3.

balancing a gospel book on his knee. A cross is incised behind Christ's head, but the nimbus is missing. The image of Christ seated on a lyre-baked throne is one of the most dominant images on Byzantine coinage in the ninth and early tenth centuries. In the late tenth century it was replaced by the image of Christ Pantokrator, but in the mid eleventh century the image of Christ seated on the lyre-backed throne reappeared on the coins of Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos and Emperor Constantine X Doukas.[7] A date in the early tenth century has been chosen for this jasper carving because Christ is represented with only a cross behind his head, instead of with a cross within a nimbus. On coins, the archaizing element of the cross without a nimbus is found mainly on bust images of Christ that date to the eight, ninth, and early tenth centuries.[8] It also appears on a series of ivory icons with the image of Christ Pantokrator that date to the tenth century, such as those in the Louvre and Fitzwilliam Museums.[9] The representation of Christ with a cross and no nimbus also appears on the tenth-century intaglio carving of the *deesis* on the reverse of the seventh-century sardonyx of the Annunciation in the Cabinet des Médailles.[10] The letter forms on the intaglio are identical to those on the jasper of Christ Enthroned in the Vatican, which suggests that the two carvings are contemporary.

There are three carved gemstones from the tenth century that can tentatively be placed within the opaque group on the assumption that they were probably bloodstones or green jaspers. Unfortunately, these gems are now lost and their material was never specified in the literature. They are the three gems with the image of St. John the Theologian, St. Nicholas, and the

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[7] Bellinger and Grierson, *Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection*, vol. 3, pt. 1, 154.

[8] The image of Christ with a cross behind his head but no nimbus appears on the coins of Justinian II, Michael III, Romanos I, Michael VII, and Alexander. See ibid., 151-153, 164-169.

[9] One the two ivory carving of Christ see Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium,* 136, nos. 83 A and B.

[10] Guillou and Durand, *Byzance*, 277, no. 184.

Archangel Michael that were set into the Ottonian "Morgengabe" cross of Holy Roman Emperor Henry II, which dates to the year of his marriage to Kunigunde of Luxemburg in 999 (nos. 5, 6, 7). The cross into which the three gems are set provides a *terminus post quem* of the year 999.[11] From the published drawing of these gems, it can be inferred that they were probably bloodstone or green jasper. They were circular in shape, and this form is almost exclusively reserved for jasper carvings.

The three gems set within the lost "Morgengabe" cross are examples of gems that are datable by their setting. Their loss is regrettable, for as datable gems they could have provided valuable insights about the style of Byzantine carved gems from this period. Fortunately, two other bloodstones that can be dated based upon their Ottonian settings do survive. They are the bloodstone of St. John the Theologian that is set into the cover of the Gospel of Otto III and the bloodstone of St. Paul that is set into the Cross Reliquary of Henry II (nos. 3, 4).[12] Their settings provide *terminus ante quem* dates of the late tenth and early eleventh centuries, respectively. On both pieces the saints are depicted in bust and turning slightly to the viewer's left. They have high, rounded foreheads and large eyes rimmed with lids that have been incised with a thin instrument. Both are inscribed in Greek, but the letter forms are not identical. The letters on the bloodstone of St. John the Theologian are large, while those on the bloodstone of St. Paul are small and angular, with the abbreviation for the word "saint" formed so that the *alpha* is barely perceptible within the *omicron.* Neither carving displays the high relief and three-dimensional forms that can be observed on the bloodstone of Emperor Leo VI. Instead, they are carved in medium relief with forms that are rounded but do not display great plasticity and halos that are

[11] Schramm and Mütherich, *Denkmale der deutschen Könige und Kaiser*, 160, table 341, no. 120. Cited in Wentzel, "Kameen," 921 and Wentzel, "Das byzantinische Erbe der ottonischen Kaiser – hypothesen über den Brautschatz der Theophano," 34.

[12] Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 19, nos. 9 and 10.

simply incised into the background. The worn surfaces of the bloodstone of St. John the Theologian suggest that it was worn as an *enkolpion* before it was reset into the book cover, but the incisions and forms of the bloodstone of St. Paul remain clearly defined.[13]

Since the two bloodstones of St. Paul and St. John the Theologian were carved decades later than the bloodstone of Emperor Leo VI, their shift towards lower relief and reduced three-dimensionality may be attributed to stylistic changes that occurred over time.[14] It is also possible that it was considered preferable to represent certain holy figures, such as apostle saints, in lower relief in order to make them appear incorporeal and spiritual.[15] The "Apostles Casket" in Dumbarton Oaks may serve as a comparative example from ivory carving.[16] On this casket, the apostles are depicted in low relief that is of a uniform height. Their flat halos are incised into the background. The decision to render these figures in low relief was undoubtedly functional and designed to prevent breakage, since their images are carved on the sides of the casket. It also, however, gives the figures an ethereal appearance that is appropriate to their identities as apostle saints.

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[13] Ibid., 19.

[14] Ioli Kalavrezou has argued that the stylistic differences among carved ivories of the late ninth through the tenth century can be attributed to developments that occurred over time as carvers experimented with a material that had not traditionally been used for icons. See Kalavrezou, "A New Type of Icons: Ivories and Steatites in the Tenth Century," 379-396.

[15] Kurt Weitzmann noticed that on manuscript painting from the eleventh century, saints were often represented in an incorporeal manner that gave them a sense of "hieratic dignity." See Kurt Weitzmann, "Byzantine Miniature and Icon Painting in the Eleventh Century," in *The Proceedings of the XIIIth International Congress of Byzantine Studies. Oxford. 5-10 September, 1966,* eds. J. M. Hussey, D. Obolensky, and S. Runcimann (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), 209. Henry Maguire has also written about the incorporeal representation of certain types of saints in *The Icons of Their Bodies: Saints and their Images in Byzantium* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 48-99.

[16] On the ivory casket see Kurt Weitzmann, *Ivories and Steatites* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Center for Byzantine Studies, 1972), 73-74, no. 30.

Four bloodstones with the image of Christ Pantokrator display a carving style that is similar to that of the bloodstone of Emperor Leo VI (nos. 17-20).[17] The four gems are so similar that they are likely to be contemporary and could even be from the same workshop. They are carved in relief that becomes increasingly higher as it moves from the lower edge of the gem to the head of Christ. Undercutting and the carving of the halos in relief enhance the three-dimensionality of the figures' heads. Plastic modeling is employed for the naturalistic rendition of the facial features, hair, and garments. The carving is detailed and includes the representation of ornamental motifs and clasps on the gospel books.

The four bloodstones share a number of compositional and iconographic elements. All are circular in form and are carved with the image of Christ Pantokrator, whose image fills the compositional space completely. Christ is represented with his right arm stretched out in a sling and his hand in a blessing gesture. In his left hand he holds a gospel book from below. Christ's left hand is covered by garments on three of the gems, but on the bloodstone in the Cabinet des Médailles his left hand is uncovered. The gems also share smaller iconographic details such as the form of the cross within the nimbus, which has flared arms. The arms are decorated with pellets on the gems in the University of Pennsylvania Museum, the Cabinet des Médailles, and the Victoria and Albert Museum, but they are left unadorned on the gem in the Vatican. The gospel books are decorated similarly, with a rectangular border of pearls. Christ's face is long, oval shaped, and mature, and his expression is neutral. His hair is parted in the middle with the

[17] The bloodstones of Christ are located in the Cabinet des Médailles, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Vatican Museum, and the University of Pennsylvania Museum. On the bloodstone in the Victoria and Albert Museum see Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury,* 86-87, c. On the bloodstone in the Vatican see Righetti, "Le opere di Glittica dei Musei Annessi alla Biblioteca Vaticana," 332-333, table V, no. 1. On the bloodstone in the University of Pennsylvania Museum see Popovich, "A Byzantine Cameo," 28-33. On the bloodstone in the Cabinet des Medailles see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 281, no. 190.

lock in the center of his forehead represented as a triangular notch. His beard is pointed and separated into two overlapping layers.

The four bloodstones of Christ Pantokrator are dated to the late tenth or the early eleventh century. Their stylistic similarities with the bloodstone of Emperor Leo VI suggest a tenth-century date, while their iconography has parallels with Byzantine coins and seals that date from the tenth century through the mid eleventh century. The image of Christ Pantokrator holding the gospel book from below with a hand that is covered by garments appears on the coin of Emperor Alexander, which dates to within 912 and 913, the seal of Emperors Romanos I, Constantine VII, and Stephen, which dates to within 931 and 944, and the coin of Romanos II, which dates to within 959 and 963. The image then reappears on the coins and seals of Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos, who reigned from 1042 to 1055.[18] To narrow the dating range for the gems, a comparison was sought using Christ's facial features and hairstyle. The narrow face, lock of hair in the center of the forehead, and pointed, layered beard are characteristic of Christ's facial features on coins and seals of the tenth through the early eleventh century. The closest parallels are found in the coin of Emperor John Tzimiskes, who reigned from 969 to 976, and the coins of Emperor Basil II, who reigned from 976 to 1025.[19] From these iconographic comparisons, a date

[18] For the coin of Alexander see Bellinger and Grierson, *Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection*, vol. 3, pt. 2, plate XXXV, no. A1. On the seal of Emperors Romanos, Constantine VII, and Stephen, see Nesbitt and Oikonomides, *Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks,* vol. 6, 101, no. 62.1. For the coin of Emperor Romanos II, see Bellinger and Grierson, *Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection*, vol. 3, pt. 2, plate XL no. 2. For the coin of Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos see Bellinger and Grierson, *Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection,* vol. 3, pt. 2, plate LIX nos. 6.2. and 6.4. On the seals of Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos see Nesbitt and Oikonomides, *Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks*, vol. 6, 121, no. 73.1 and 123-124, nos. 73.7 and 73.8

[19] On the coins of Emperor John Tzimiskes and Emperor Basil II see Bellinger and Grierson, *Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection,* vol. 3, pt. 2., plates XLII-XLV. The similarities between the facial types of Christ on the coins of Emperor Basil II and Emperor John Tzimiskes and the face of Christ on the bloodstone in the University of Pennsylvania Museum were used as evidence for dating the gems to the late tenth or early eleventh century in Popovich, "A Byzantine Cameo," 32.

range from the late tenth through the early eleventh century can be established for the four bloodstones of Christ Pantokrator.

A small sub-group of two green jaspers and one bloodstone are also dated to the late tenth or early eleventh century. They are a green jasper with the image of St. John the Theologian, a green jasper with the image of St. Nicholas, and the bloodstone with the image of St. John the Baptist (nos. 13, 14, 15).[20] The green jasper of St. John the Theologian and the bloodstone of St. John the Baptist are both circular in form. It is likely that the green jasper with St. Nicholas was originally circular and was cut down to its present rectangular shape. This is indicated by the fact that part of its inscription has been cut off. The figures are carved in relief of medium height. The halos are raised in slight relief and articulated with a double-lined incision. The figures are well formed and proportional and the carving is detailed. The gospel books are decorated with the pearl motif. The letter forms on the three gems are identical. The stylistic, composition, and epigraphic similarities among them suggest that they were produced in the same workshop.

The three gems are dated to the late tenth or early eleventh century in part because they display stylistic similarities with other bloodstone and jasper carvings from this period. Their detailed carving, well-proportioned figures, and naturalistically modeled facial features liken them to the bloodstones of Christ Pantokrator, while the medium height of the relief and the subtle three-dimensionality invites a comparison with the bloodstones of St. Paul and St. John the Theologian. The proposed date for these gems is supported by an iconographic comparison of the figure of St. Nicholas on the green jasper with the same figure on ivory and steatite

[20] The bloodstone with the image of St. John the Baptist is located in the Kunsthistorisches Museum. See Eichler and Kris, *Die Kameen im Kunsthistorischen Museum,* 94, no. 127. The green jasper with the image of St. John the Theologian Enthroned is located in the Cabinet des Médailles. See Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 280, no. 188. The green jasper with the image of St. Nicholas is located in the Musée des Beaux Arts in Lyon. See ibid., 279, no. 187.

carvings of the tenth and eleventh centuries. The comparisons were discussed in detail in Chapter Three, so they will not be discussed further here except to note that the likeness between the carvings of St. Nicholas strengthen the dating of this sub-group to the late tenth or early eleventh centuries.[21]

Gems from the opaque group that date to the first half of the eleventh century are carved in relief of a low to medium height. Although the heads of figures are raised in relief that is higher than that of the bodies, they are not undercut and their three-dimensionality is subtle. This carving style can be observed, for example, on the bloodstone with the image of Christ Standing in the Kremlin Museum and the bloodstone with the image of Christ Pantokrator in the Hermitage Museum (nos. 21, 23).[22] The Hermitage bloodstone is round and measures 3 cm in diameter. The Kremlin bloodstone has a rectangular base and an arched top and measures 8.8 cm in height. On these gems, plastic modeling is employed but straight, linear cuts are predominantly employed instead of curved lines. These techniques result in a figure style that retains some naturalism but also appears slightly abstract.

On the gems with the image of Christ that have been examined thus far, Christ is depicted holding his right hand stretched out in a sling. On the two eleventh-century bloodstones of Christ, however, he holds his right hand directly in front of his body. Christ is pictured holding his right hand in front of his body on images from the tenth and eleventh centuries, such as a

[21] The green jasper of St. Nicholas can be compared with the eleventh-century Harbaville triptych, the tenth-century Palazzo Venezia triptych, and the eleventh-century steatite of St. Nicholas in the Cabinet des Médailles. On the steatite see Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 105, no. 13. On the Harbaville triptych, see Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium,* 133, no. 80. On the Palazzo Venezia triptych see Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, "Eudokia Makrembolitissa and the Romanos Ivory," 320-321, no. 15.

[22] On the Hermitage bloodstone with the image of Christ Pantokrator see Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 120-121, no. 634 and Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium*, 175-176, no. 128. On the Kremlin bloodstone of Christ Standing see Bank, *Isskutsvo Vizanti,* vol. 2, 120-121, no. 631 and Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 204-206, no. 28. Sterligova has noted the relationship between these two gems and has dated them to the same period in ibid., 206.

tenth-century illustration in a gospel lectionary on Mt. Sinai.[23] The image of Christ in the gospel lectionary has some parallels with the image of Christ on the Kremlin bloodstone (no. 21), including the naturalistic proportions of the figure, the positioning of the feet upon a jeweled platform, and the manner in which the draperies fall over Christ's left arm in heavy folds. As a point of contrast, in the manuscript image Christ's body appears voluminous beneath the garments, while on the bloodstone the contours of Christ's body are not visible and the garments fall down in straight, vertical folds.

On the Hermitage gem with the image of Christ Pantokrator, Christ's right hand is held in front of his body with his palm facing out (no. 23). The gem is inscribed on the obverse with the title *Eleemon,* or "The Merciful." The reverse is inscribed with the phrase, "Christ the Lord, he who hopes in you will not fail."[24] Neither the positioning of Christ's hand with his palm facing outward nor the inscription naming him as "The Merciful" appear frequently in Byzantine art, although there is a mosaic icon in the Bode Museum in Berlin from the twelfth century with the same inscription.[25]

The facial features of Christ are similar on the two bloodstones. His face is oval shaped, his cheeks are full, his beard is short, and his hair is parted down the center. A single lock of hair falls down the center of his forehead. His large eyes are incised with pupils and rimmed with heavy eyelids that are formed with thin, angular incisions. The presence of a quincunx motif on Christ's nimbus on the gem in the Hermitage suggests that the two pieces should be dated to the

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[23] *Mt. Sinai Cod. 204.* See John Beckwith, *The Art of Constantinople: an Introduction to Byzantine Art, 330-1453*. (New York: Phaidon Publishers, 1961), 83, no. 104.

[24] On the obverse: IC XC O ΕΛΕΗΜΩΝ. On the reverse: ΧΡΙCΤΕ Ο ΘΕΟC Ο ΕΙC CΕ ΕΛΠΙΖΩ ΟΥΚ ΑΠΟΤΥΓΧΑΝΕΙ. On the inscriptions see Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium*, 175-176, no. 128.

[25] Ludwig Wamser, *Die Welt von Byzanz: Europas östliches Erbe: Glanz, Krisen und Fortleben einer tausendjährigen Kultur* (Stuttgart: K. Theiss, 2004), 154-155, no. 196.

early eleventh century.[26] The similarities in carving and figure style suggest that the two pieces are from the same workshop.

The remaining gems from the opaque group that date to the eleventh century have been broken into two sub-groups for the purpose of analysis and dating. The first sub-group, which dates to the first half of the eleventh century, includes three bloodstones of Christ Pantokrator, a bloodstone of Christ Enthroned, and a red jasper with the image of the *Anastasis* (nos. 25-28, 177).[27] Some of the gems include the detail of the quincunx decoration on Christ's halo, which helps to confirm their dating to the first half of the eleventh century. They display abstract elements and a linear carving style in which parts of the figure are delineated by stark incisions instead of with smoothed, modeled forms. The relief ranges in height from low to medium and is highest for the rendition of the figures' heads. Although plastic modeling is limited, the figures are proportional and well formed.

These characteristics can be observed, for example, on the bloodstone of Christ Pantokrator in the Vatopedi Monastery (no. 25). The figure is rendered in relief of a medium height and the figure's head is represented in higher relief. Plastic modeling is employed for the rendition of Christ's facial features and hands, but the plasticity is overshadowed by the stark

[26] The quincunx motif first appears on Byzantine coins in the early eleventh century. The dating of the piece to the early eleventh century on the basis of the quincunx decoration of Christ's halo was discussed in Evans, and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium,* 175-176, no. 128. The quincunx detail appears on the coins of Michael IV Paphalogian from 1034 to 1041, Theodora from 1055 to 1056, and Michael VII Doukas from 1071 to 1078. See Bellinger and Grierson, *Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection,* vol. 3, pt. 2, plate LVII (Michael IV Paphagonian), plate LXII (Theodora), plate LXVI (Michael VII Doukas).

[27] The bloodstones of Christ Pantokrator are located in the British Museum, the State Historical Museum in Moscow, and the Vatopedi Monastery. On the British Museum gem, see Dalton, *Catalogue of the Engraved Gems of the Post-Classical Periods in the Department of British and Mediaeval Antiquities,* 2 no. 8. On the gem in the State Historical Museum of Moscow, see Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 124, no. 643. On the gem in the Vatopedi Monastery see Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 42-43, no. 7. The bloodstone of Christ Enthroned is located in the Hermitage Museum. See Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 124, no. 644. The red jasper of the Anastasis is located in the State historical Museum in Moscow. See ibid., 125, no. 645.

linear incisions that delineate the figure and its features. The bold incisions lend an abstract quality to the figure and render it clearly visible in the dark, opaque stone.

The gems from the second sub-group date to the second half of the eleventh century. They are loosely dated based upon their stylistic and technical similarity to the serpentine roundel of the Virgin Orant in the Victoria and Albert Museum (no. 41).[28] The serpentine roundel is dated by its inscription that refers to Emperor Nikephoros Botaniates, who reigned from 1078 to 1081 (no. 41).[29] The gems of this sub-group are carved in relief that ranges from low to medium in height. Their carving style is characterized by curved lines and forms that are subtly modeled to have a smooth, round appearance. The roundness is especially noticeable in the figures' faces, which are carved with circular cheeks and eyes. The gems of this sub-group include three bloodstones with the image of the Virgin Orant, one bloodstone with the image of the Virgin Hodegetria (no. 81), two bloodstones of the Archangel Michael (nos. 46, 47), and one bloodstone with the image of the Crucifixion (no. 48).[30] It should be noted that the gems with the image of the Virgin Orant are of the same iconographic type as the one that appears on the

[28] Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury,* 90.

[29] The serpentine roundel is one of several carved gems identified by Hans Wentzel as a fixed point for dating because of its inscription. See Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 10-11.

[30] The three bloodstones with the image of the Virgin Orant are located in the Content colection, the private collection of William Milliken, and Dumbarton Oaks. On the gem in the Content collection see Martin Henig, *The Content Family Collection of Ancient Cameos* (Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 1990), 122, no. 194. On the gem in the collection of William Milliken, see Carmen Gómez-Moreno, *Medieval Art from Private Collections: a Special Exhibition at The Cloisters, October 30, 1968 through January 5, 1969* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1968), 211. On the gem in Dumbarton Oaks, see Asen, Carder, and Nelson, *Sacred Art, Secular Context,* 60, no. 4. The bloodstone with the image of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa is located in the Vatopedi Monastery. See Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia* 56-57, no. 15. The bloodstones of the Archangel Michael are located in the Cabinet des Médailles and the Vatopedi Monastery. See Guillou and Durand, *Byzance*, 280, no. 189, and Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia* 50-51, no. 12. The bloodstone with the image of the Crucifixion is located in the Victoria and Albert Museum. See Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury,* 86-87 d.

serpentine roundel of Emperor Nikephoros Botaniates. In this variation upon the earlier type of orant image, the Virgin holds her arms in front of her body with her palms facing out.

The image appears, for example, on the bloodstone of the Virgin Orant at Dumbarton Oaks (no. 42).[31] This large bloodstone measures 6.1 cm high and is oval in shape. It is carved with a standing figure of the Virgin Orant holding her hands in front of her body with her palms open and facing frontally. She stands on a platform, which is represented in two dimensions as a simple incised rectangle. Her body is carved in low relief, and her head carved in higher relief. Her halo is carved so that it is slightly elevated in relief. Although the Virgin's head is carved in the highest relief, the sense of three-dimensionality is subtle because the height of the relief increases gradually from the feet to the head. As noted in Chapter Three, this technique was also used for the carving of the serpentine roundel. As another parallel with the serpentine roundel, plastic modeling is achieved by rounding forms that are carved in low relief in order to give them a soft and full appearance. This is especially visible in the treatment of the Virgin's cheeks and her lower jaw, which is round, full, and slightly undercut so that it produces a shadow beneath her chin.

The bloodstone of the Crucifixion in the Victoria and Albert Museum is larger than the size of the average *enkolpion* and is therefore well suited for the representation of a narrative scene (no. 48).[32] It is shaped with a rectangular base and an arched top. The figures are carved in relief of a medium height. The heads of the figures and the *suppedaneum* are carved in higher relief. The faces of the Virgin and St. John are circular and their cheeks and eyes are rounded. The round forms of the faces and facial features are echoed by circular halos, which protrude

[31] Asen, Carder, and Nelson, *Sacred Art, Secular Context,* 60 no. 4.

[32] This piece measures 6.2 cm high and 6.1 cm wide. See Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury,* 86, d.

slightly in relief. The garments are modeled with smooth curves beneath which only a slight articulation of the body is visible.

The dating of the piece to the second half of the eleventh century is confirmed by iconographic details that place emphasis upon Christ's suffering. The naturalistic portrayal of Christ's suffering appears in Crucifixion scenes only as early as the eleventh century. By the twelfth century, Crucifixion scenes are fraught with emotion, with the grief of the Virgin and St. John expressed through facial expressions and gestures.[33] On the bloodstone, Christ's suffering is expressed by his tilted head and the positioning of his lifeless body in a limp curve. The Virgin and a youthful St. John stand to either side in static poses, with calm expressions on their faces. The representation of Christ's suffering indicates that the piece should date to at least the eleventh century, while the facial expressions of the Virgin and St. John lack the emotion that could place it in the twelfth century.

The gems of the next sub-group date from the late eleventh century to the early twelfth century. These gems are larger than the average *enkolpion* and are skillfully carved from stones of an excellent quality. Two are carved from lapis lazuli. Several are carved with a frame that is raised to the same height as the relief of the figures. The figures are naturalistically modeled, proportional, and elegant. The date range of the late eleventh through the early twelfth century was chosen because some of the gems display a carving style that is similar to that of the serpentine roundel of Nikephoros Botaniates. Over time, however, the broad, rounded facial features disappear as the relief becomes lower, the figures become more slender and ethereal, and the faces become longer and thinner. The gems within this sub-group include two bloodstones and a green jasper with the image of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa (nos. 45, 49, 50), a

[33] Henry Maguire, *Image and Imagination: The Byzantine Epigram as Evidence for Viewer Response* (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Balkin Studies, 1996), 24.

red jasper of the Virgin Orant (no. 51), a pair of bloodstones with the image of Christ and the Virgin Orant (nos. 37, 38), a lapis lazuli of the Virgin Enthroned (no. 55), and a double-sided lapis lazuli of Christ and the Virgin Orant (no. 56).[34]

The dating of these gems to the period of the late eleventh century through the early twelfth century is strengthened by iconographic comparisons with artworks in other media. The gems with the image of the Virgin Orant and the Virgin Hagiosoritissa may be compared with marble reliefs of the Virgin from the eleventh and twelfth centuries, such as the stone icon of the Virgin Orant in the Archeological Museum of Istanbul and the stone icon of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa in Dumbarton Oaks (C14, C19).[35] The carving and figure style of the gems within this sub-group may also be compared with the twelfth-century steatite icon of the Virgin Hodegetria in Stuttgart because of their low relief, delicate forms, and slender figures (C20).[36]

Three of the gems that exemplify the carving and figure style of this sub-group are the bloodstone with the image of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa in the Walters Art Gallery, the bloodstone with the image of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa in the Abegg-Stiftung Museum, and the red jasper with the standing Virgin Orant in the British Museum (nos. 45, 50, 51). The gems

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[34] One bloodstone of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa is located in the Walters Art Gallery, and the other is located in the Abegg-Stiftung Museum. On the gem in the Walters, see Miner, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art,* 114, no. 555. On the gem in the Abegg-Stiftung Museum, see Trumpler, "Die byzantinische Marienkamee der Abegg-Stiftung in Riggisberg," 9-15. The green jasper of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa is located in the Kunsthistorisches Museum. See Eichler and Kris, *Die Kameen im Kunsthistorischen Museum,* 97, no. 134. The red jasper of the Virgin Orant is located in the British Museum. See David Buckton, *Byzantium: Treasures of Byzantine Art and Culture from British Collections*, 158-159, no. 172. The bloodstones of Christ and the Virgin are located in the Hermitage Museum, and the lapis lazuli of the Virgin Enthroned is located in the Kremlin. See Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 121 and 124, nos. 633, 634, and 642. The lapis lazuli of Christ and the Virgin is located in the Louvre. See Guillou and Durand, *Byzance*, 284 no. 195.

[35] On the stone relief in Istanbul see Belting, *Likeness and Presence,* 187, no. 108. On the stone relief at Dumbarton Oaks see Sirarpie Der Nersessian, "Two Images of the Virgin in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 14 (1960): 80-83, no. 6.

[36] Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 122, no. 31.

with the Hagiosoritissa image are so closely related to each another in carving style, iconography, and epigraphy that it can be concluded that they were carved in the same workshop. They have been dated to the late eleventh century because they exhibit carving techniques that are similar to those of the serpentine roundel of Emperor Nikephoros III Botaniates. Differences in the carving and figure style of the red jasper of the Virgin Orant suggest that it is roughly contemporary with the two bloodstones, but might not have been carved in the same workshop.

The two bloodstones with the image of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa are nearly twice the size of the average carved gemstone.[37] The Walters gem has rectangular base and an arched top, and the gem in the Abegg-Stiftung Museum is rectangular with a carved rim that is decorated with an acanthus motif. Both, therefore, have formal elements that are characteristic of larger icon plaques. The two pieces also share a similar carving style. For example, the Virgin's *maphorion* is spherical in shape and its surface is carved in several sections. The *maphorion* is also carved in sections on the serpentine roundel, but since the Virgin is represented frontally the sections are layered and serve to give the figure depth and three-dimensionality. Other similarities between the three carvings include the representation of a cap beneath the *maphorion* and a shared facial type, in which the Virgin's cheeks and chin are soft and round, her nose that is narrow, and her eyes are encircled by carved rims.

The two bloodstones share iconographic elements as well. For example, the *maphorion* is carved with the stripe motif and is draped so that it falls over the Virgin's arm in long folds. The Virgin stands on a pedestal with her narrow feet almost hidden beneath her garments, and turns to the side with her hands held out in prayer. A small figure of Christ giving a blessing is

[37] The Walters bloodstone measures 5.7 cm in height and the bloodstone in the Abegg-Stiftung Museum measures 6.8 cm in height. Measurements from Miner, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art,* 114, no. 555 and Trumpler, "Die byzantinische Marienkamee der Abegg-Stiftung in Riggisberg," 9.

represented in the upper corner of the gem in the Abegg-Stiftung Museum, but this detail is missing on the gem in the Walters Art Gallery. The reverse of both gems is carved with a symbol that is remniscent of the *globus cruciger,* which suggests that their owners may have belonged to the imperial family.[38] The large size and high quality of the two gems supports this inference. The final element that links them is the *nomina sacra*, which is formed so that the letters *mu* and *eta* overlap.[39] The stylistic, iconographic, and epigraphic similarities between the two bloodstones suggest that they were carved in the same workshop.

The red jasper of the Virgin Orant in the British Museum shares stylistic and iconographic elements with the two bloodstones (no. 51). The gem is oval in shape and measures 6.3 cm in height. The red jasper may have been chosen for its unusual surface qualities. Red jasper is often dark and brownish-red in color, but the British Museum gem is bright red and its surface is enlivened with white speckles and bright yellow veins. It is a thin stone, measuring only 0.55 cm in thickness, and it is carved with a frame that is slightly raised. The standing figure of the Virgin Orant is carved in extremely low relief that is raised just to the height of the carved frame. Her pedestal projects over the frame, giving the impression that the she is entering the viewer's space. This visual device also appears on the bloodstone in the Abegg-Stiftung Museum and on the double-sided lapis lazuli in the Louvre (nos. 50, 56).

The standing Virgin holds her hands out to the sides in prayer. The fabric of her sleeves falls into a series of horizontal folds. Her *maphorion* is draped over her arms and falls gracefully to the sides of her body, ending in folds that resemble those on the two bloodstones of the Virgin

[38] An X-ray of the gem in Abegg-Stiftung revealed that the reverse was carved with an image that resembles the *globus cruciger*, which is exactly like the one on the reverse of the gem in the Walters Art Gallery. See Trumpler, "Die byzantinische Marienkamee der Abegg-Stiftung in Riggisberg," 10-11.

[39] Ibid., 10-11.

Hagiosoritissa (nos. 45, 50). As another parallel with the two bloodstones, the hood of the Virgin's *maphorion* is spherical in shape and is carved in sections.

Despite its stylistic and iconographic similarities with the two bloodstones of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa, the red jasper displays small differences in carving style. As noted already, the gem is carved in extremely low relief. The raised forms are nearly flat, but they have been slightly rounded in order to create the impression of depth and modeling. The Virgin's body is mostly hidden beneath the smooth, vertical folds of her garments. Only her left knee is indicated, by means of an oval-shaped form. As a result, she appears slender and ethereal. Her face is also thinner and more angular than the face of the Virgin on the two bloodstones and the serpentine roundel. The letter forms of the red jasper are similar to those of the two bloodstones, but the *nomina sacra* contains only the *mu* and the *theta.* The red jasper of the Virgin Orant is probably contemporary with the two bloodstones of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa, but it is not certain that it can be attributed to the same workshop.

The low relief and slender, ethereal figure style of the red jasper can also be observed on the double-sided lapis lazuli with the image of Christ and the Virgin in the Louvre (no. 56). This piece is one of very few Byzantine gems that is still mounted in its original frame, which has been dated to the eleventh or twelfth centuries.[40] It measures 8.3 cm in height and is shaped with a rectangular base and an arched top. Both sides are carved with a frame that is slightly raised. A standing figure of Christ is represented on the obverse. His face is oval in shape, his nose is wide, and his hair and beard are full and disheveled. His right arm is stretched out in a sling, an iconographic detail that recalls the figure on the tenth-century bloodstone of Leo VI (no. 1). The reverse is carved with a standing figure of the Virgin Orant, who is represented with her arms

[40] Guillou and Durand, *Byzance*, 284, no. 195.

held to the sides like the figure of the Virgin on the red jasper in the British Museum (no. 51). The Virgin's face is oval in shape, like the face of Christ on the obverse.

The carving style of the lapis lazuli is similar to that of the red jasper in the British Museum. The figures are rendered in low relief that does not extend above the height of the frame. The pedestals project over the frame. Despite the low relief, the figures are proportional and modeling is achieved through the rounding of slightly raised forms. Deep incisions in the shape of trees are placed on both sides of the gem and filled with gold. Gilding is also present on the halos, the gospel book, and the quatrefoil motifs on the Virgin's garments.[41] A date in the late eleventh century may be considered for the lapis carving in the Louvre because it shares stylistic and iconographic elements with the red jasper in the British Museum. The extremely low relief, disheveled appearance of Christ's hair, and oval shape of the figures' faces indicate, however, that it may be even later in date.[42] Therefore, the piece has been dated broadly to the period of the late eleventh through the early twelfth centuries.

The lapis lazuli with the image of the Virgin Enthroned in the Kremlin Museum is dated to the same general period (no. 55).[43] This piece measures 7 cm in height and is formed in an unusual shape, with a rectangular base and a trilobed top. It is carved with an image of the Virgin Enthroned. The Virgin holds the Christ child in her left arm, as she does in Hodegetria

[41] Gilding seems to have been reserved for lapis lazuli carvings, as the only other carved gemstone in this study that is gilded is the lapis lazuli with the image of Christ Standing in the Kremlin Museum (no. 22). As another comparison, the figures of the lapis lazuli Crucifixion in the Treasury of San Marco are wrought in gold relief (no. 146). Steatite carvings of the middle Byzantine period were sometimes gilded. On the gilding of steatites see Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 31-35.

[42] Durand has made this argument for the dating of this piece to the first half of the twelfth century in Guillou and Durand, *Byzance*, 284, no. 195.

[43] Scholars have consistently argued for an early twelfth-century date for this gem. See Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii*, vol. 2, 124 no. 642; Alisa V. Bank, *Prikladnoe Iskusstvo Vizantii,* 128; Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 216-218, no. 33.

images, but she does not gesture towards him. On most images of the Virgin Enthroned, which date to as early as the ninth century, the Virgin holds the Christ child in front of her body. The positioning of the Christ child on the Virgin's left knee therefore suggests that the carving dates to the later part of the middle Byzantine period and supports a twelfth-century dating.

Another unusual iconographic element that can be identified on the lapis carving is the throne upon which the Virgin is seated. In most representations of the Virgin Enthroned, she is seated upon the simple backless throne called a *threnos*. On the lapis carving, however, she is seated upon the lyre-backed throne, which is a thronal type that was usually associated with Christ. Alisa Bank proposed that the presence of this unusual type of throne could support the dating of the lapis carving to the early twelfth century.[44] Anthony Cutler has argued, however, that the lyre-backed throne is an archaizing thronal type that is most associated with pre-Iconoclastic and tenth-century representations of the Virgin and Child. He has identified the lapis lazuli carving as latest representation of the Virgin and Child seated upon this type of throne.[45] The presence of the lyre-backed throne, therefore, cannot be used to date the lapis carving.

Bank also argued that the trilobed shape of the lapis lazuli carving should place it within the early twelfth century.[46] This may be accurate, although it should be noted that the trilobed shape of the lapis carving recalls the shape of the mandorla behind the enthroned Virgin on two ivories in the Musée des Beaux Arts de la Ville de Paris and the Cleveland Museum of Art,

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[44] Bank, *Prikladnoe Iskusstvo Vizantii*, 128.

[45] On the iconography of the lyre-backed throne see Anthony Cutler, *Transfigurations: Studies in the Dynamics of Byzantine Iconography* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University, 1975), 15-28. For Bank's analysis of this carving see Bank, *Prikladnoe Iskusstvo Vizantii,* 128.

[46] Bank, *Prikladnoe Iskusstvo Vizantii*, 128. This dating rationale was echoed in Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities*, 218.

which have been dated to the tenth or the early eleventh centuries.[47] These comparisons are not cited in order to argue for a tenth or eleventh-century dating for the lapis lazuli carving, but rather to suggest that its trilobed shape may also be intended to resemble a mandorla.

The twelfth-century dating, which could only tentatively be suggested on the basis of the lapis carving's iconography and shape, is confirmed by its carving style. The piece is carved in low relief. The figure of the Virgin is slender and elegant, and her thin face is oval shaped. The garments and the throne are rendered in a flat and two-dimensional manner. Circular and rectangular shapes are hollowed out of the throne. They do not appear to have ever been filled with stones, and are therefore most likely ornamental.[48] With its low relief and slender figure style, the lapis carving of the Virgin Enthroned compares most closely with the double-sided lapis carving of the Virgin and Christ in the Louvre, which in the discussion above was dated to the late eleventh or early twelfth century.

The next sub-group is notable as all of the pieces within it can be attributed to the same workshop. They are several bloodstones of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa, a bloodstone of the Virgin Enthroned, a bloodstone of the Virgin Blachernitissa, and a sapphire of the Virgin Enthroned (nos. 71-75, 163).[49] The gems are dated to the early twelfth century on the basis of a *terminus ante quem* supplied by the bloodstone in Léon, which is set into a Spanish reliquary that was

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[47] Both ivories discussed in Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium,* 140, no. 87. It is suggested that the ivory in Paris may have been carved in the West.

[48] Bank, *Prikladnoe Iskusstvo Vizantii*, 128.

[49] On the bloodstone of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa in Cividale (no. 72), see Fogolari, *Cividale del Friuli*, 115-116. On the bloodstone of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa in Dumbarton Oaks (no. 71), see Asen, Carder, and Nelson, *Sacred Art, Secular Context:* 61, no. 6. On the bloodstone of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa in the Catedral de Léon (no.73) see Gómez-Moreno, *Provinca de León,* 282, no. 388. On the bloodstone of the Virgin Enthroned in Berlin (no. 74), see Volbach, *Mittelalterliche Bildwerke aus Italien und Byzanz*, 125, no. 2737. On the bloodstone of the Virgin Blachernitissa in the Tretyakov Gallery (no. 163), see Teteriatnikov, "The Image of the Virgin Zoodochos Pege," 236, no. 19.5. On the sapphire in the Kremlin (no. 75), see Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 221-223, no. 35.

donated to the cathedral in 1128.[50] The blue chalcedony with the image of the Virgin Enthroned in the Metropolitan Museum is related to this sub-group because it shares some epigraphic and stylistic elements, but the figure of the Virgin is wider and the throne upon which she sits is more sturdy and decorative (no. 134).[51] The chalcedony is therefore dated to the early twelfth century by its association with this sub-group, but it has not been placed within it.

The gems of the sub-group share the same carving and figure style. All are carved with an image of the Virgin and three of the six represent the Virgin Hagiosoritissa. The gems are carved in low relief that becomes higher for the rendition of the figures' heads. The halos are incised into the stone. The backs of the head are not undercut, but there is undercutting beneath the chins. The Virgin's mantle frames her face in loose, angular folds that reveal her cheeks and the lower curve of her jaw. Her nose is triangular and her cheeks are full and smooth, but not rounded. The folds of the *maphorion* are rendered with curved, diagonal incisions that divide the flat surface into forms that have been softened by smoothing the edges. The folds on the Virgin's sleeves are indicated by curved, horizontal cuts.

The six gems are carved with identical letter forms, which appear angular because they are represented entirely with straight incisions. For example, bowl of the *rho* is rendered with straight lines instead of curved lines, with the result that it is square-shaped instead of circular. The letters are finished with serifs of straight horizontal strokes. These shared letter forms strengthens the impression that these six gems were carved in the same workshop.

Several of the gems display imagery that is more expressive than what has been represented on carved gemstones from earlier centuries. For example, on those with the image of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa, the Virgin's head is tilted back so that her gaze follows the direction

[50] Gómez-Moreno, *Provinca de León,* 282, no. 388.

[51] Draper, "Cameo Appearances," 18, no. 28.

of her hands, which are raised in supplication. The movement implied by the positioning of the Virgin's head contrasts with the more static representation of the same theme on the bloodstones in the Walters Art Gallery and the Abegg-Stiftung Museum, which date to the late eleventh century (nos. 45, 50). The expressiveness of these twelfth-century representations of the Hagiosoritissa is typical of devotional art of the period, which is known for its increased emphasis upon the portrayal of emotion.[52]

There is another small sub-group from the twelfth century that is comprised of two bloodstones that are so closely related to each other that could have been carved in the same workshop. They are the bloodstone of the prophet Daniel in the Cabinet des Médailles and the bloodstone of the Virgin Orant in the British Museum (nos. 159, 160).[53] Together they can be dated to the second half of the twelfth century on the basis of carving style, iconography, and epigraphy. Both are irregular in form, which indicates that they were not reshaped before they were carved. The bloodstone of the Virgin measures 3.4 cm in height and the bloodstone of the prophet Daniel measures 2.9 cm in height. The figures are rendered in relief of a medium height. The head of the Virgin projects slightly, but most of the figure of Daniel is contained to the same plane. The figures are symmetrical. Their arms are held in front of their bodies and their heads taper to a narrow, rounded point. For Daniel, this point is turned into the Phrygian cap, and for the Virgin it is turned into the hood of her *maphorion*. Both figures have oval shaped faces, flat, triangular noses and blank, almond-shaped eyes. These characteristics can be observed on other twelfth-century gems from the opaque group.

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[52] Ioli Kalavrezou, "Images of the Mother: When the Virgin Mary became *Meter Theou*," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 44 (1990): 171-172.

[53] On the bloodstone with the Virgin Orant see Dalton, *Catalogue of the Engraved Gems of the Post-Classical Periods,* 3, no. 11. On the bloodstone of the prophet Daniel see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 438-439, no. 330.

Although the carving style of the two bloodstones places them within the twelfth century, the iconography of the bloodstone of Daniel indicates that a dating in the second half of the twelfth century is most likely. Daniel is rendered in bust, facing frontally, and holding an open scroll in front of his body. The scroll is inscribed with the words, "I Daniel" (ΕΓΟ ΔΑ(νιήλ)), a phrase that appears frequently in the apocalyptic prophecies in the Book of Daniel.[54] The image of Daniel that appears earlier on Byzantine gems is the image of Daniel between the lions, whereas the bust image of Daniel holding a scroll or a book only appears on gems from the mid twelfth century onward.

A bloodstone with the image of St. George in the Cleveland Museum is dated to the second half of the twelfth century on the basis of iconography (no. 88).[55] The gem is shaped as a slightly irregular oval and measures 3.2 cm in height. The figure of St. George is represented in bust. He holds a sword over his shoulder in his right hand and a triangular shield decorated with a cross motif in his left hand. His cloak is wrapped around his body and his shirt is decorated with a criss-cross motif at the collar. His neck is long, his face is slender, and his eyes are blank and almond shaped. His wavy hair is combed back. This gem can be dated to the second half of the twelfth century on the basis of the form of the shield. The elongated triangular shield is a Crusader shield that was only adopted by Byzantine troops as early as the mid twelfth century.[56]

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[54] On the inscription, see the catalogue entry in Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 438-439, no. 330. In the catalogue, bloodstone of the prophet Daniel is dated to the thirteenth century on the basis of the form of the *delta*. I have identified this letter form on carved objects from the twelfth century, such as the twelfth-century incense boat in the treasury of San Marco, and therefore disagree with the dating rationale presented in the catalogue. On the incense boat at San Marco see A. V. Bank, "Two Plastic Monuments of Thessalonica," *Vizantīĭskīĭ vremennik* 54 (1968): 266-268 and Buckton, *The Treasury of San Marco,* 292, no. 43.

[55] On the gem in the Cleveland Museum see Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 88 no. 93; Holger A. Klein, *Sacred Gifts and Worldly Treasures: Medieval Masterworks from the Cleveland Museum of Art* (Cleveland: Cleveland Museum of Art, 2007) 79, no. 21.

[56] Grotowski, *Arms and Armour of the Warrior Saints,* 234.

This dating is supported by the figure style, since elongated necks, slender heads, and almond shaped eyes can also be found on other gems from the second half of the twelfth century, especially those in the semi-translucent and sardonyx groups. The figure style of Christ on the late twelfth-century sapphire Dumbarton Oaks provides an especially close parallel (no. 105).[57] In addition to the almond shaped eyes, long neck and narrow head, the figure of Christ on the sapphire is dressed in a garment that is carved with the same cross-hatched motif on the collar.

Many gems from the opaque group can be dated to the late twelfth century on the basis of their stylistic and iconographic similarities with the bloodstone of Alexios Doukas from the Cini Collection in Venice (no. 118). As noted in Chapter Four, Hans Wentzel demonstrated that this bloodstone could be dated by its inscription that refers to Alexios Doukas.[58] Alexios Doukas reigned for less than a year in 1204 and was executed at the end of his reign. Although his death provides a *terminus ante quem* for the gem in 1204, the inscription's lack of an imperial title suggests that the gem may have been carved earlier. For the sake of simplicity I have chosen to date the piece to the late twelfth century, with the understanding that it may have been carved as late as the first few years of the thirteenth century.

The bloodstone of Alexios Doukas measures 4 cm in height and has a rectangular base and an arched top. The obverse is carved with a standing, half-length figure of St. John the Baptist, who is represented with a bare chest and a cloak draped over his left shoulder. He holds a cross-topped staff in his left hand and holds his right hand in front of his body in a gesture of speech. The figure's head appears to be carved in higher relief than the rest of the figure, although this cannot be verified since the bloodstone is lost and was not photographed from the side. The halo is carved with a double line to give the impression of three-dimensionality.

[57] Asen, Carder, and Nelson, *Sacred Art, Secular Context,* 59, no. 3.

[58] Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 11-12.

Plastic modeling was employed to depict the contours of the saint's chest, the bones and muscles of his thin arms, and his facial features. His eyes are almond shaped and blank. Although the carving displays three-dimensionality and plastic modeling, it also has linear elements. For example, the Baptist's hair and beard are represented through a series of linear incisions that have a pattern-like appearance.

The reverse is carved with a standing figure of St. George. He holds a sword over his shoulder in his right hand and rests his left hand on a shield. The shield is of the kite-shaped type, which appears on images of Byzantine warrior saints as early as the second quarter of the eleventh century.[59] The saint is dressed in quilted armor, which is represented by a diamond pattern. This manner of representing quilted armor appears only as early as the twelfth century.[60] A small figure kneels before the saint in supplication. He is identified by the inscription as Alexios Doukas.[61] The carved figure is lacking in detail, yet it is remarkable as the only portrait of a supplicant to appear on any Byzantine gems that have survived. The carving style of the reverse differs from the carving style of the obverse. The relief is flatter and the carving is more linear, with forms delineated through incisions instead of being modeled in three-dimensions. For example, flat, circular forms are employed for the rendition of St. George's face, eyes, and hair, while his armor is delineated with simple, linear incisions.

It is possible that the carving of the reverse differs from that of the obverse so that the gem could rest flat against the body without protruding forms that would cause discomfort. The flat relief and linear carving style can also be observed, however, on bloodstones from the late twelfth century that are only carved on the obverse, such as the bloodstone of St. George in the

[59] Grotwoski, *Arms and Armour of the Warrior Saint*, 231-233.

[60] Ibid., 152-153.

[61] AΛ(E)ΞIOC O Δ(O)YKAC

British Museum (no. 130).[62] This linear carving style may have been employed because it made the figure appear more clearly in the dark, opaque stones, or perhaps simply because it involved carving techniques that were easier to employ.

Gems of the late twelfth century display stylistic elements of both the obverse and the reverse of the gem in the Cini Collection. Some are carved in high relief with the use of plastic modeling, while others are carved in relief that is flat, with forms that are delineated by incisions instead of modeled. The eyes of figures tend to be left without an incised pupil. Some of the gems are carved with a dot motif that appears on the edges of garments or shields. The bloodstones in the late twelfth-century sub-group include one of the prophet Daniel (no. 125), several with the image of Christ Pantokrator (nos. 120, 121, 122), one with St. John the Theologian (no. 123), one with St. Theodore (no. 124), one with the Virgin Hodegetria (no. 128), one with St. George (no. 130), a double-sided bloodstone with the Virgin and Child Enthroned and St. Panteleimon (no. 126), a double-sided bloodstone of the Archangel Michael and St. Demetrios (no. 129), one with the image of St. George (no. 131), and one with the image of St. Theodore Stratelates and St. Theodore Tiron (no. 132).[63]

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[62] Buckton, *Byzantium: Treasures of Byzantine Art and Culture in British Collections,* 159, no. 173.

[63] On the bloodstone of the prophet Daniel in the Correr Museum (no. 125) see Wentzel, "Kameen," 922. On the bloodstone of Christ Pantokrator in the Ortiz Collection (no. 122) see Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium*, 175, no. 127. On the bloodstone of Christ Pantokrator in the Vatopedi Monastery (no. 120) see Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 82-83, no. 25. On the three bloodstones of Christ, St. John the Theologian, and St. Theodore in Kassel (nos. 121, 123, 124) see Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 88-93, nos. 80, 85, and 86. On the bloodstone of the Virgin Hodegetria in the British Museum (no. 128) see Dalton, *Catalogue of the Engraved Gems of the Post-Classical Periods* 3, no. 12. On the bloodstone of St. George in the British Museum (no. 130) see Buckton, *Byzantium: Treasures of Byzantine Art,* 159, no. 173. On the double-sided bloodstone in the Kanellopoulos Museum (no. 126) see N. Chatzidakis and C. Scampavias, eds., *The Paul and Alexandra Canellopoulos Museum, Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* (Athens: *The Paul and Alexandra Canellopoulos* Foundation, 2007), 97, no. 90. On the double-sided bloodstone with Archangel Michael and St. Demetrios in the Walters Art Gallery (no. 129) see Miner, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art,* 11,4 no. 556. On the bloodstone with St. George in the Khanenko Museum (no. 131), see Popovich, "An examination of the Chilandar cameos," 40, no. 36. On the double-sided bloodstone with the image of St.

The bloodstones of Christ in Kassel, the Vatopedi Monastery, and the Ortiz Collection exhibit clear similarities with each other and with other gems of this late twelfth-century sub-group (nos. 120, 121, 122). The heads are rendered in high relief and plastic modeling is used to render the facial features, garments, hands, and the gospel book in relief. Christ's hair is parted symmetrically and carved with linear incisions. Christ's eyes are large and blank on the Kassel and Vatopedi gems, but they are incised with a pupil on the gem in the Ortiz Collection. The dot motif is present on the Kassel and Ortiz gems, but not on the Vatopedi gem. The Kassel and Vatopedi gems are carved with the same letter forms, which are curved and end in circular points. Similar letter forms are found on other gems from this sub-group, including the bloodstone of the prophet Daniel in the Correr Museum, the bloodstones of St. Theodore and St. John the Theologian in Kassel, and the double-sided bloodstone in the Kanellopoulos Museum (nos. 123-126). In contrast, the letters on the Ortiz bloodstone are wrought with straight, thin incisions. The Ortiz bloodstone is carved on the reverse with a patriarchal cross, which is identical to the one represented on the reverse of the bloodstone of St. John the Theologian in Kassel.

The gems from the sub-group that exhibit lower relief and flatter forms include the two bloodstones of St. George, the double-sided bloodstone with the Archangel Michael and St. Demetrios, and the double-sided bloodstone with the image of St. Theodore Stratelates and St. Theodore Tiron (nos. 129-132). The bloodstone of St. George in the British Museum may be described as an example (no. 130). The gem is oval in shape and measures 4.1 cm in height. St. George is represented as a half figure. He holds a sword over his shoulder in his right hand and holds a small round shield decorated with small crosses in his left hand. His cloak is slung over

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Theodore Stratelates and St. Theodore Tiron in the State Historical Museum of Kiev (no. 132) see Putzko, "Die zweiseitige Kamee in der Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore," 177-179, no. 4 a, b.

his left shoulder. He is dressed in quilted armor that is represented with a diamond pattern. The presence of the diamond patterned quilted armor, which was also observed on the figure of St. George on the gem in the Cini Collection, dates this gem in the second half of the twelfth century at the earliest.[64] The gem is carved in low relief that is highest for the rendition of the figure's head, which is wrought in medium relief. Despite the variation in the height of the relief, most of the carving is kept to the same plane. Certain forms, such as those of the saint's right hand and his shield, protrude only slightly. The saint's face is flat, with his eyes and nose carved with wide, rounded forms. The apparent flatness of the carving may be accentuated by wear, which is evident on the surface of the gem. With its low relief, linear carving style, and flat forms, the gem has many stylistic parallels with the carving of St. George on the reverse of the gem in the Cini Collection. It is dated to the late twelfth century accordingly.

There are other gems from the opaque group that displays some stylistic similarities with the gems that were just described, but they are generally of a lower quality.[65] The stones are irregularly shaped, the inscriptions are loosely incised, and elements such as facial features and hands tend to be outlined instead of modeled in relief. The figures are wrought in an abbreviated manner with stark, linear incisions. The forms are loosely carved and sometimes disproportionate. Six are carved with the image of the Virgin Orant (nos. 161, 164, 167-70).[66]

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[64] Grotowski, *Arms and Armour of the Warrior Saints,* 152-154.

[65] Ljubica Popovich identified this group and discussed the gems within it in Popovich, "An examination of the Chilandar cameos," 26.

[66] On the gem with the Virgin Orant in the Chilandar Monastery (no. 164) see ibid., 22-28. On the gems in the Cabinet des Médailles and in Lyon (nos. 161, 168), see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance*, 285, nos. 196 and 198. On the gem in Rostov (no. 169) see Pucko, "Neskol'ko vizantijskich kamej iz drevnerusskich gorodov," no. 11. On the gem in Pskov (no. 170) see S. V. Iamschikov, *Pskov: Art Treasures and Architectural Monuments, 12th-17th centuries* (St. Petersburg: Aurora Art Publishers, 1978), no. 49. On the gem in the Hermitage (no. 167) see Bank, *Prikladnoe Iskusstvo Vizantii,* 125, no. 111. In ibid., Alisa Bank wrote that there are three other closely related nephrite carving of the Virgin Orant at the

One, a stone of green quartz, is carved with the image of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa (no. 162).[67] There are two bloodstones and two red jaspers that are carved with the image of Christ Pantokrator (nos. 172-175).[68] Finally, there is a red jasper with the image of St. John the Theologian (no. 171).[69]

Instead of a sub-group, these gems are better understood as a series. Ljubica Popovich identified them as such in his article on the gems in the Chilandar Monastery of Mt. Athos.[70] He noticed that while the gems display similarities in carving style and iconography, they also differ in quality. Popovich proposed that the gems that are of a higher quality were carved earlier, perhaps either in Constantinople or directly after gems that were carved in Constantinople. He argued that the others, which are executed with a rougher, more abbreviated carving style, were carved later in a provincial center.[71]

For example, Popovich identified the bloodstone with the image of Christ Pantokrator in the Chilandar Monastery as one of the more skillfully carved pieces within the series (no. 173). He demonstrated that it displays stylistic similarities with gems that are thought to originate in

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Hermitage, from the Lemmlein collection. They were not included in the study because I was unable to find published images or additional information.

[67] The queen quartz of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa is located in Dumbarton Oaks. See Asen, Carder, and Nelson, *Sacred Art, Secular Context*, 60, no. 5.

[68] A bloodstone and a red jasper of Christ are located in the Chilandar Monastery (nos. 173-174). See Popovich "An examination of the Chilandar cameos," 13-19. A bloodstone of Christ Pantokrator is located in the Belgrade Museum (no. 172). See ibid., 16-17; Cormack and Vasilakē, *Byzantium, 330-1453*, 230, no. 202. A bloodstone of Christ Pantokrator is located in the Novgorod Historical Architectural Museum (no. 175). See Darkevich, *Svetskoe iskusstvo Vizantii,* 291, no. 33.

[69] The red jasper of St. John the Theologian is located in the Cabinet des Médailles. See Guillou and Durand, *Byzance*, 287, no. 203.

[70] Popovich treaded the gems as a series, identifying some that were probably earlier and from Constantinople and others that were probably later and provincial. My conclusions are mostly in line with his. See Popovich, "An examination of the Chilandar cameos," 26.

[71] Ibid., 15-28.

Constantinople, such as the sapphire of Christ Pantokrator in Dumbarton Oaks (no. 105). The Dumbarton Oaks sapphire and the bloodstone of Christ Pantokrator in the Chilandar Monastery share a similar figure style that is characterized by narrow, oval shaped faces, blank, almond shaped eyes, and hair that is parted in the middle and rendered with linear incisions. The *nomina sacra* is formed similarly, with the *chi* appearing significantly larger than the *sigma,* to which it is attached. These letter forms appear mainly carved gemstones of the late twelfth-century, although they also appear on the silver gilt reliquary of the Holy Sepulcher in the Louvre, which dates to the second half of the twelfth century.[72] Popovich also noted that although the two pieces are similar, the Chilandar bloodstone was not as skillfully carved. The carving style is linear and abbreviated and the figure of Christ is slightly disproportioned. The neck is entirely missing and the head is oddly formed in a bulbous shape. Popovich concluded that the Chilandar gem was carved either in Constantinople or directly after a gem from Constantinople. The Chilandar gem, in turn, served as the model for the other gems with the image of Christ Pantokrator in Belgrade, Novgorod, and the Chilandar Monastery (nos. 172, 174, 175).[73]

The gems with the image of Virgin also appear to have been modeled after twelfth-century gems that originate in Constantinople, such as the bloodstones of the Virgin Orant in the

[72] On the reliquary see Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium,* 440-441. Unfortunately, the published image does not show the book cover. The book cover has an image of a victory cross with the *nomina sacra* of Christ formed in the same way that it is represented on carved gemstones.

[73] At the time that Popovich wrote his article, the Dumbarton Oaks sapphire was dated to the tenth-century. This led Popovich to propose a time frame from the tenth through the early thirteenth centuries for the series of carvings of Christ. Although I agree with Popovich's theory, I have dated the Dumbarton Oaks sapphire to the twelfth century and therefore have concluded that the time frame for the series extends from the twelfth through the thirteenth centuries. See Popovich, "An examination of the Chilandar cameos," 15-19.

British Museum and in the Musée des Beaux Arts in Lyon (nos. 155, 160).[74] The earliest of them is most likely the bloodstone with the image of the Virgin Orant in the Chilandar monastery (no. 164).[75] This irregularly-shaped gem measures 4 cm in height. The Virgin is represented in bust, with her arms held in front of her body in prayer. The gem displays a carving style that is characterized by relief of a medium height, linear incisions, and abbreviated, flat forms. The draperies are rendered by means of overlapping diagonal incisions. The Virgin's expression appears severe, as a result of the angular incisions that were used to form her facial features.

The Chilandar bloodstone differs from the two twelfth-century bloodstones of the Virgin in two respects. One difference concerns the form of the neckline of the Virgin's garment, which is round on the twelfth-century gems but is square on the gems in the series. The other difference concerns the letter forms of the *nomina sacra.* On all of the gems in the series, the three stems of the *mu* are of the same height and are connected with a single horizontal cross bar. The final stem of the *mu* functions as the stem of the *rho.* The bowl of the *rho* is small and circular. For the abbreviation of the word *Theou,* the letters are large, wide, and loosely carved. These letter forms are also found occasionally on twelfth-century gems with the image of the Virgin that are thought to have been carved in Constantinople, such as the blue chalcedony in the Kremlin Museum (no. 53).[76] According to Popovich's theory, this would suggest that the letter forms were transferred to the gems in the series through the copying of a piece from Constantinople.

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[74] On the bloodstone in Lyon see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance*, 285 no. 197. On the bloodstone in the British Museum see Dalton, *Catalogue of the Engraved Gems of the Post-Classical Periods in the Department of British and Mediaeval Antiquities,* 3, no. 11.

[75] Popovich also identifies this work as the earliest in the series. See "An examination of the Chilandar cameos," 22-28.

[76] On the blue chalcedony of the Virgin in the Kremlin Museum, see Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 212-213, no. 31.

Over time, the caring and figure style of the gems with the image of the Virgin seems to evolve. The figures become progressively wider and flatter and the carving technique becomes looser and more abbreviated. For example, on the bloodstone of the Virgin in the Musée des Beaux Arts in Lyon, the figure is wide and the facial features and garments are composed of block-like forms (no. 168). The Virgin's face is wrought with a rectangular form that is rounded at the edges and her cheeks, eyes, and hands appear full and disproportioned. Relatively few incisions were used for the carving. This piece could be the last of the series, as it exhibits the new elements of carving and figure style to the greatest extent.

The differences in carving style, figure style, and quality that can be observed between the gems in this series and the other twelfth-century gems from the opaque group lend credence to Popovich's theory that the gems in the series are provincial copies of twelfth-century gems from the capital. Popovich's theory is convincing because it accounts for the similarities as well as the differences between the gems, and because it allows for a stylistic progression that occurs over time. The stylistic progression that can clearly be observed among the gems in the series would be difficult to explain without the assumption that gem carving continued in a provincial center in the thirteenth century, as it is assumed that the production of luxury objects diminished in the capital after it was conquered by the Crusaders. Popovich's theory also provides an explanation for the relatively poor quality of the gems within the series, as provincial centers may have lacked the necessary tools or craftsmen who were sufficiently skilled to produce works that matched the quality of those in the capital. Finally, his theory that many of the pieces were carved in the provinces during the thirteenth century accords with the fact that several pieces are connected with medieval Serbia, which was powerful and prosperous at that time. The Chilandar Monastery, which holds many of the pieces, is a Serbian Monastery and there are documents that

suggest that the bloodstone of Christ in Belgrade may have originally been located in Peç. Therefore, Popovich's suggestion that some of the gems were produced in a provincial center for the Serbian court and church is reasonable.[77]

Popovich's theory can tentatively be accepted for the reasons listed above, with the reservation that none of the gems in the series can be linked with the provinces with certainty. Popovich did suggest two urban centers that were large and prosperous enough to support gem carving in the early thirteenth century. One is Thessaloniki.[78] As one of the largest provincial cities, it could have supported at least one workshop that could have produced carve gemstones. Thessaloniki also had extensive trade networks with Constantinople and with the Serbian provinces.[79] Popovich also suggested Jerusalem as a provincial center in which the gems may have been carved. This suggestion was based upon a letter that was written in the thirteenth century by the Serbian Archbishop Sava. In this letter, Archbishop Sava wrote that he was sending the monastery gifts from Jerusalem, including a cross and a small stone. Popovich suggested that the small stone could be a carved gemstone.[80]

An alternate theory must also be considered, which is that some of the gems from the series were carved in the capital after it was restored to Byzantine control in the mid thirteenth-century. The gems could have been carved in the late thirteenth century or even in the fourteenth century using gems from the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries as models. The fact that several of the gems within this series are now in Russian collections supports this alternate

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[77] Popovich, "An examination of the Chilandar cameos," 16-18.

[78] Ibid., 17-18.

[79] Angeliki Laiou, "Regional Networks in the Balkans in the Middle and Late Byzantine Periods," in *Trade and Markets in Byzantium,* ed. Cecil Morrison (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2012), 135-137.

[80] Popovich, "An examination of the Chilandar cameos," 43-44.

theory, as many of the Byzantine gems in Russian collections were given to Russian church officials and diplomats as gifts in the late Byzantine period.[81] Given the impossibility of proving either theory, I have tentatively accepted the one proposed by Popovich and have dated the gems to either the late twelfth or thirteenth century, or to the thirteenth century, depending upon where they fall within the series.

The Late Byzantine Period

Only nineteen gems from the opaque group date to the late Byzantine period, and most are stylistically isolated. This suggests that the production of carved gems decreased in the late Byzantine period and that it was decentralized, with most of the pieces produced by individual craftsmen instead of by workshops in Constantinople. These changes are the result of circumstances that affected the economy, artisanal production, and urban structures in the late Byzantine period. Trade in the luxury arts continued during the late Byzantine period, but it was increasingly controlled by the powerful Venetians and Genoese.[82] The Byzantine imperial family and aristocracy had lost much of their wealth, especially by the second half of the fourteenth century. They were not able to patronize artisans who produced luxury arts to the same degree as had the elites of the middle Byzantine period.[83] As a result of these circumstances, artisanal production decreased, imperial and state-run workshops shut down, and

[81] Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 20-21.

[82] Angeliki Laiou, "The Byzantine Economy in the Mediterranean Trade System Thirteenth through Fifteenth centuries," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 34/35 (1980/1981): 182-187.

[83] Laiou and Morrisson, *The Byzantine Economy*, 182-184.

workshops became smaller and private. With a shrinking clientele, artisans worked with customers on an individual basis.[84]

Further, in the late Byzantine period power and wealth were decentralized and there were territories outside of Constantinople that could have supported artisans working in the luxury arts. These territories include the Latin Crusader states, the Greek successor states of Trebizond and the Despotate of Epiros, and the kingdoms of Bulgaria and Serbia.[85] Cities, while smaller, were more independent than they were in the middle Byzantine period. Thessaloniki, in particular, was a major participant in trade with Venice and Byzantine territories and had its own small-scale production of goods that included metalwork.[86] Therefore, it is likely that some of the gems from the late Byzantine period were produced in territories and cities outside of Constantinople.

The individuality of the gems from the late Byzantine period and the fact that there are relatively few of them means that they usually cannot be used to date one another through stylistic and technical comparisons. They have therefore been dated on the basis of iconography and epigraphy, as well as by stylistic comparisons with other monuments of late Byzantine art. It should noted that many of the pieces have been loosely dated to a range of two centuries, since it was not possible to place them into one century with relative certainty.

The bloodstone with the image of the prophet Daniel in Sergiev Posad is dated to the fourteenth or fifteenth century on the basis of iconography (no. 188).[87] Although on middle

[84] Matschike, "The Late Byzantine Urban Economy," 491-492.

[85] Laiou and Morrison, *The Byzantine Economy*, 167.

[86] Ibid., 198-199.

[87] P. Jurgenson, "Zur Frage des Charakters der byzantinischen Plastik während der palaiologenzeit," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 29 (1929): 271-272.

Byzantine representations Daniel is usually facing frontally or turned slightly to the side, on the bloodstone in Sergiev Posad he is turned to the side with emphasis and is slightly bent over. The scroll, which on middle Byzantine representations is held neatly in front of Daniel's body, is unfurled dramatically at a diagonal angle. The large Phrygian cap and tilted head give the figure a slightly mannered appearance. The image can be compared to representations of the prophet Daniel in late Byzantine icons and frescos, such as the fifteenth-century icon of Daniel in the Tretyakov Gallery.[88]

Gems with the image of the Archangel Michael from the late Byzantine period also display a departure from middle Byzantine representations of the Archangel. Middle and late Byzantine representations of the Archangel on carved gemstones are alike in that he is dressed in armor and holds a sword over his right shoulder. An iconographic shift can be observed, however, on late Byzantine gems in which the Archangel holds the sheath of his sword behind him with his left hand. The Archangel's cape, which hangs calmly in middle Byzantine representations, is sometimes curved to indicate that it is moving in the wind. The Archangel's armor is also more elaborate, as is typical in general for all images of warrior saints from the late Byzantine period.[89] On the basis of these iconographic characteristics, three nephrite carvings and one bloodstone with the image of the Archangel Michael can be dated to the late Byzantine period (nos. 179, 190-192).[90]

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[88] On the fifteenth-century icon of Daniel see Alfredo Tradigo, *Icons and Saints of the Eastern Orthodox Church* (Los Angeles: J. P. Getty Museum, 2006), 76.

[89] Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images,* 151.

[90] On the nephrite carving of the Archangel Michael in the Kremlin (no. 190) see Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities*, 244, no. 45. On the two nephrite carvings in the Vladimir and Suzdal Museum of History, Art, and Architecture (nos. 191, 192), see Pucko, "Neskol'ko vizantijskich kamej iz drevnerusskich gorodov," 135, nos. 14 and 15. On the bloodstone of the Archangel Michaelin the Vatopedi Monastery (no. 179) see Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 118-119, no. 40.

Although on carved gems the Archangel Michael is usually depicted as a standing figure, on one late-Byzantine bloodstone in the Kremlin he appears in bust form. The gem is oval in shape and measures 5 cm in height (no. 178).[91] The Archangel Michael is represented from the waist up, holding a sword over his shoulder with his right hand. With his left hand, he holds the sheath of the sword behind his body. The placement of the sheath behind the body supports the dating of the piece to the late Byzantine period, as does the detailed manner in which the figure's armor and wings are carved. The iconography invites a comparison with the steatite carved with the half-length figure of the Archangel Michael in the Benaki Museum, which has been dated to the thirteenth century.[92] On the basis of this comparison, the bloodstone of the Archangel Michael in the Kremlin Museum is also dated to the second half of the thirteenth century.

The bloodstone of the Archangel Michael in the Kremlin Museum is one of few late Byzantine gems that is closely related to another gem from the same period. It is similar in size, shape, carving style, and figure style to the red jasper with the image of St. John the Baptist in the Walters Art Gallery (119).[93] The Walters red jasper measures 4.7 cm in height and is oval in shape. The Baptist is represented as a standing half figure. He holds a cross-topped staff in his left hand and holds his right hand in front of his chest in a gesture of speech. His chest is bare, but a fur garment is slung over his shoulder and wrapped around his waist. His hair and beard are disheveled in the manner that recalls the John the Baptist in the *Deesis* fresco in Hagia

[91] Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities*, 234-235, no. 40.

[92] Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite*, 186, no. 105.

[93] This connection is made by Sterligova in *Byzantine Antiquities,* 234-235, no. 40. On the Walters gem see Miner, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art*, 114, no. 559.

Sophia, which dates to around the year 1260.[94] The figure of the Baptist resembles the figure of the Archangel on the Kremlin bloodstone in several respects. Both are carved in relief of a similar height. The figures have broad chests, which is typical of the late Byzantine figure style. Plastic modeling is used for the naturalistic rendition of facial features, hair, and anatomy. The faces are modeled with smooth, round contours and the eyes are blank and rimmed by eyelids. The right arms are slender and bent at the same angle. Although the figure style could place the Walters gem broadly into the late Byzantine period, its similarities to the bloodstone of the Archangel Michael in the Kremlin allow this date range to be narrowed to the second half of the thirteenth century.

The green jasper with the image of St. John the Theologian that was once in the Sacristy of the Patriarch in Moscow is dated to the late Byzantine period on the basis of its figure style and iconography (no. 186).[95] The saint is represented in bust. He turns to his left and bends over his gospel book. Although on carved gemstones St. John the Theologian is nearly always represented turned to the side, it is only on late Byzantine gems that he appears to be bent over his book. The saint is represented in a similar manner, for example, on the small green chrysoprase in the Kunsthistorisches Museum that also dates to the late Byzantine period (no. 183).[96] Other elements that argue for a dating in the late Byzantine period include the broad width of the figure and the way in which the garments are rendered with nervous, angular

[94] Natalia B. Teteriatnikov, *Mosaics of Hagia Sophia, Istanbul: The Fossati Restoration and the Work of the Byzantine Institute* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1998), 54, no. 58.

[95] On the gem see F. du Mély, "Le trésor de la Sacristie des patriarches de Moscou," in *Monuments et Mémoires* (Paris: Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, 1905), 208-209, no. 4.

[96] Eichler and Kris, *Die Kameen im Kunsthistorisches Museum*, 98, no. 138.

incisions.[97] Garments are rendered in a similar way on other artworks from the late Byzantine period, such as the mosaic icon with the Virgin Eleousa in the Church of Santa Maria della Salute in Venice.[98]

[97] Ioli Kalavrezou identified garments rendered in the nervous, zig-zag pattern as a characteristic of the carving style of late Byzantine steatites. See Kalavrezou *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 47.

[98] Helen C. Evans, *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261-1557)* (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2004), 216, no. 127.

Chapter Five: The Semi-Translucent Group

This chapter is focused on the dating of Byzantine gems in the semi-translucent group, which includes the translucent and semi-translucent stones of amethyst, sapphire, blue chalcedony, blue quartz, blue agate, and rock crystal. The semi-translucent group contains thirty-seven gems. Almost all of them can be dated to the middle Byzantine period, and the majority date to the twelfth century. Only one has been dated to the fourteenth or fifteenth century. It is likely that by the late Byzantine period, fewer people could afford semi-translucent gemstones. The state and the aristocracy had lost much of its wealth by the late Byzantine period, and their ability to purchase precious materials subsequently decreased. Imitation gemstones of glass were sometimes substituted for expensive, semi-translucent gemstones, even in imperial regalia.[1] Writing in the mid-fourteenth century, the historian Nikephoras Gregoras sadly related that the coronation crown of Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos was a poor construction of gilded leather set with imitation gemstones of glass paste. The real coronation crown was in the possession of the Venetians, who held it as a guarantee for a loan made to the Byzantine emperor.[2]

Many of the gems in the semi-translucent group share a distinctive carving and figure style that is the result of techniques that were aimed at preserving the stone and minimizing incisions. This was necessary because of the high value of semi-translucent gems and because

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[1] Laiou and Morrisson, *The Byzantine Economy*, 182-184.

[2] Cecily J. Hilsdale, *Byzantine Art and Diplomacy in an Age of Decline* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 1-2; Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images*, 29.

one of them, sapphire, is extremely hard.[3] It is possible that the techniques that were developed for carving sapphire were subsequently applied to other semi-translucent gems, perhaps in imitation of sapphire carving. The other semi-translucent gems, including blue chalcedony and amethyst, are softer. As varieties of quartz, they have roughly the same hardness as jasper.[4]

Most of the gems in the semi-translucent group are carved with a technique in which the carving follows the natural convex curve of the stone. The relief is lowest at the lower edge of the gem and grows gradually higher as it nears the upper edge of the gem. The result is that the heads of the figures are carved in the highest relief and seem to project. Although this carving technique necessitates cutting away the stone that surrounds the figure's head, it may have been considered easier or more economical because gemstones are naturally convex and this technique does not require the gem to be sized down or flattened. Another reason to believe that carvers working with semi-translucent stones tried to minimize incisions is that most of the gems are carved so that the figure is self-contained, with hands held in front of the body instead of out to the side. This compositional arrangement simplifies the form and makes it easier to carve into the hard material. For the same reason, bust figure are favored over standing figures and narrative scenes are almost never represented. Gems in the semi-translucent group also lack the carved details and ornamental motifs that appear on jasper and lapis lazuli carvings.

The carving techniques described above were not employed for every single gem from the semi-translucent group. For example, an amethyst with the image of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa in the Vatopedi Monastery displays none of the stylistic elements that were

[3] Sapphire has a score of 9.0 on the Mohs scale. See Webster and Read, *Gems: Their Sources, Descriptions, and Identification*, 78.

[4] Ibid., 221-241.

described above (no. 127).[5] Instead, it is carved with techniques that are most characteristic of bloodstone carvings from the late twelfth century. Its closest stylistic parallel is the bloodstone of the Virgin Enthroned in the Kanellopoulos Museum (no. 126).[6] Therefore, although most of this chapter is dedicated to those gems that display the most typical carving style of the semi-translucent group, at the end of this chapter two sapphires that are carved with different techniques will also be discussed.

Most of the gems from the semi-translucent group are dated to the eleventh and twelfth centuries. There are, however, two from the tenth century that are carved with an almost identical iconographic theme. One, in the Hermitage, is a blue chalcedony and the other, in the Museum of London, is an amethyst (nos. 8, 9).[7] They are carved with the image of St. George and St. Demetrios standing side by side. The two tenth-century carvings were already described in detail in Chapter Three, so here only their dating rationale is discussed. The two gems have been dated to the tenth century on the basis of iconography and carving style. The representation of the saints as martyrs instead of as warriors argues for a tenth-century dating because by the eleventh century martyred soldiers were typically depicted wearing armor and carrying weapons.[8] The figure style of the two gems is also similar to that of carved icons in ivory and steatite from the tenth century. As discussed in Chapter Three, the production of carved gemstones was limited in the tenth century and the pieces share stylistic and iconographic

[5] Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 70-71, no. 20.

[6] Chatzidakis and Scampavias, *The Paul and Alexandra Canellopoulos Museum,* 97, no. 90.

[7] Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 120 no. 630; Forsyth, *The Cheapside Hoard,* 179-180. The imagery of the gems is nearly identical except that the positioning of the saints is reversed.

[8] White, *Military Saints in Byzantium and Rus, 900-1200*, 85-92; John Cotsonis, "The Contribution of Byzantine Lead Seals to the Study of the Cult of the Saints (Sixth-Twelfth Century)," 470-471; Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 63-65; Pentcheva, *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 85-86.

elements with carvings of ivory and steatite. The carving techniques that produced the distinctive style of the semi-translucent group had not yet been developed. The style cannot be identified until the eleventh century, which suggests that carvers began experimenting with new techniques that were unique to semi-translucent gems at that time.

The carving style that characterizes many of the gems within the semi-translucent group is best exemplified by a series of gems that date from the twelfth century through the early thirteenth century.[9] They include a two blue chalcedonies of St. Nicholas (nos. 101, 102), a sapphire of St. John the Baptist (no. 104), a blue chalcedony of St. Basil (no. 100), two sapphires of Christ Pantokrator (nos. 105 and 108), an amethyst of Christ Pantokrator (no. 106), a blue chalcedony of Christ Emmanuel (no. 109), an amethyst of St. Marina (no. 115), a blue chalcedony of the Virgin Nikopoios (no. 116), a sapphire of St. Demetrios (no. 112), and an amethyst of the Virgin Orant (no. 113).[10] These gems are carved according to the technique described above. The height of the relief increases gradually according to the curve of the gem

[9] The proposed dating window is 1100-1204.

[10] On the blue chalcedony of St. Nicholas and the sapphire of St. John the Baptist in the Louvre (nos. 101, 104), see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 287, nos 201 and 202. On the blue chalcedony of St. Basil in the Hermitage (no. 100) see Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 120, no. 629. On the blue chalcedony of St. Nicholas in The Vladimir and Suzdal Museum of History, Art, and Architecture (no. 102) see Pucko, "Neskol'ko vizantijskich kamej iz drevnerusskich gorodov," 129-130, no. 12. On the sapphire of Christ Pantokrator in Dumbarton Oaks (no. 105) see Kirin Asen, James Nelson Carder, and Robert S. Nelson, Asen, Carder, and Nelson, *Sacred Art, Secular Context,* 59 no. 3. On the amethyst of Christ Pantokrator in the Phoenix collection in Geneva (no. 106) see David Talbot Rice, *Masterpieces of Byzantine Art: Catalogue of Exhibits* (Edinburgh: University Press, 1958), 62, no. 185. On the sapphire of Christ Pantokrator in Sergiev Posad (no. 108) see T. V. Nikolaeva, *Proizvedeniia melkoĭ plastiki XIII-XVII vekov v sobranii Zagorskogo muzeia: katalog* (Zagorsk: Zagorskiĭ gos. istoriko-khudozhestvennyĭ muzeĭ-zapovednik, 1960), 245-246, no. 116a. On the blue chalcedony of Christ Emmanuel in Novgorod (no. 109) see Darkevich, *Svetskoe iskusstvo Vizantii,* 291, no. 34 and Pucko, "Neskol'ko vizantijskich kamej iz drevnerusskich gorodov," 117, no. 2. On the amethyst of St. Marina in the State Historical Museum of Moscow (no. 115) see Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 124, no. 641. On the blue chalcedony with the Virgin Nikopoios in the Kremlin Museum (no. 116) see Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 214-215, no. 32. On the sapphire of St. Demetrios and the amethyst of the Virgin Orant in Kassel (nos. 112, 114), see Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 90, nos. 82 and 87.

and is highest for the rendition of the figure's heads. Some of the heads are slightly undercut in order to heighten their three-dimensional quality. The figures are represented as self-contained busts with their hands placed in front of their bodies. They are elegant and slender, with narrow necks and heads. The heads and faces are carved with more detail and plastic modeling than the bodies, which are carved in an abbreviated manner with the result that they appear slightly abstract. The eyes are almond shaped and blank and are not incised with a pupil. This, coupled with their slender elegance, lends the figures a spiritual and otherworldly appearance.

This group of gems is described as a series because the narrow elongation and abstraction of the figures seems to become more pronounced over time. The blue chalcedony of St. Nicholas in the Louvre is probably the earliest of the series (no. 101). The saint's face is naturalistically carved but his garments, hand, and gospel book are rendered in an abbreviated and slightly abstract manner. The figure could be described as slender, but it is not narrow or elongated. The sapphire of St. Demetrios in the Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel is among the latest of the series (no. 112). The figure of the saint is slender, his neck is narrow and elongated, and his face is thin. His blank, almond shaped eyes are disproportionately large in comparison with the size of his narrow head. His garments and shield are represented in an abbreviated manner with minimal incisions. The gem's abstract appearance may also be partially attributed to its small size, as it measures only 1.6 cm in height. Working with such a small gem, the carver would have needed to form the figure with very few incisions.

The blue chalcedony of St. Basil in the Hermitage and the sapphire of Christ in Dumbarton Oaks were initially dated to the tenth century because of their high relief and because the heads of the figures protrude away from the background (nos. 100 and 105).[11] The dating

[11] This dating rationale was proposed by Marvin Ross in *Metalworks, Ceramics, Glass, Glyptics, Painting,* vol. 1, *Catalogue of the Byzantine and Early Mediaeval Antiquities in the Dumbarton Oaks*

rationale was based upon what was known at the time as the typical figure style for relief carving in the tenth century. More recently, Jannic Durand proposed a twelfth-century date for the blue chalcedony of St. Nicholas and the sapphire of St. John the Baptist in the Louvre (nos. 103, 104). Durand's dating rationale was based upon a stylistic and iconographic comparison of the blue chalcedony of St. Nicholas with the sardonyx of St. Nicholas in the Kremlin. The sardonyx had been dated to the eleventh or twelfth century based upon the metalwork of its frame (no. 101).[12]

The two carvings of St. Nicholas display many similarities. On both, the saint is represented with the typical attributes of his portrait type including a high, rounded forehead and a short beard. He wears the bishop's stole, called the *omophorion*, which on both gems is adorned with a single cross on each side. The saint's garments are represented in an abbreviated and linear manner. His right hand, which is held in front of the body in blessing, appears disproportionately large. The gospel book is left adorned and is rendered with a simple rectangular shape. Given the stylistic and iconographic similarities between the two gems, Durand's conclusion that they date to the same period can be accepted.[13]

Durand's dating rationale provides the starting point for dating all of the semi-translucent gems that display similar stylistic characteristics. Their iconography and epigraphic forms suggest that most date to the twelfth century. I have therefore proposed a dating window of 1100 to 1204 for the entire series.

Collection, 99-100, no. 120. Hans Wentzel and Alisa Bank agreed with Ross' dating. See Wentzel, "Kameen," 922; Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 120, no. 629; Bank, *Prikladnoe Iskusstvo Vizantii,* 123.

[12] Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 287, nos. 201 and 202. On the dating of the sardonyx of St. Nicholas in the Kremlin see Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 123, no. 636.

[13] Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 287 no. 201 and 202. Durand's dating rationale was recently used to date the sapphire of Christ in Dumbarton Oaks to the twelfth century. See Asen, Carder, and Nelson, *Sacred Art, Secular Context,* 59 no. 3.

The iconography of the sapphire of John the Baptist in the Louvre is datable, as the image of the Baptist with a bare chest appears on lead seals only as early as the late eleventh century (no. 104).[14] On carved gemstones, the image of the Baptist with a bare chest appears most frequently on pieces that date to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. One of these pieces, the bloodstone of Alexios Doukas in the Cini Collection, is dated with relative certainty to the late twelfth century (no. 118).[15] The iconography of the sapphire in the Louvre therefore strengthens the argument for a dating window that centers upon the twelfth century. So too does the iconography of the blue chalcedony of Christ Emmanuel in the Historical Architectural Museum of Novgord (no. 109). The image of Christ Emmanuel is associated with the twelfth century because it was popularized by Emperor Manuel I Komnenos, who reigned from 1143 to 1180. This emperor took Christ Emmanuel as his namesake and placed the image of the youthful Emmanuel on his coins and seals.[16]

Another argument for dating the gems of the series to the twelfth century concerns their stylistic similarity with some twelfth-century gems of the opaque group. For example, in carving and figure style, the sapphire of St. John the Baptist compares closely with the bloodstone of Alexios Doukas in the Cini Collection (no. 118). On both gems the relief appears higher for the rendition of the figures' heads. Plastic modeling has been employed to render facial features and

[14] Citing Likachev, Bank identifies the late eleventh century as the time at which when the bare chest appears in the iconography of St. John the Baptist. See A. V. Bank, "Vier byzantinisierende Kameen aus der Ermitage," in *Beiträge zur Kunst des Mittelalters: Festschrift für Hans Wentzel zum 60. Geburtstag,* ed. Rüdiger Becksmann (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 1975), 13.

[15] Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 10-12, nos. 2 and 3.

[16] Annemarie Weyl Carr, "Gospel Frontispieces from the Comnenian Period," *Gesta* 21 no. 1 (1982): 15. On the seal of Manuel Komnenos with the image of Christ Emmanuel see Nesbitt and Oikonomides, *Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks*, vol. 6, 180 no. 93.1. On the coin of Manuel Komnenos with the image of Christ Emmanuel see Bellinger and Grierson, *Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection*, vol. 4*,* 231, no. 1.

anatomical forms in three dimensions. The Baptist's hair is parted down the center and wrought with a series of linear incisions. His eyes almond shaped, blank, and surrounded by thick eyelids. The figure style of the sapphire differs as the figure is more slender and the head and neck are more elongated. As noted, these are distinctive characteristic of carvings in the semi-translucent group and are usually not found to the same extent on carvings of the opaque group.[17]

Finally, a dating in the twelfth century for the semi-translucent gems is confirmed by epigraphy. Four are carved with an image of Christ, and on all of these the *nomina sacra* is formed in a similar manner (nos. 105, 106, 108, 109). The letters are formed with straight, linear incisions. They are not adorned with serifs or decorative flourishes. The *chi* and the *sigma* are connected, and the *chi* is significantly larger than the *sigma*. This manner of representing the *nomina sacra* of Christ appears on carved gemstones from the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries, including a group of red jaspers and bloodstones that were discussed in Chapter Four. The presence of these letter forms on all of the gems in this series that are carved with the image of Christ provide further evidence that they should be dated to the twelfth century.

One gem that exemplifies those in this series is the sapphire carved with the image of Christ Pantokrator at Dumbarton Oaks (no. 105). The sapphire is oval in shape and perfectly symmetrical. It measures 3.4 cm in height. The stone is convex on the obverse and the reverse. Its edges are beveled, which was the standard way of preparing a gemstone for mounting in Byzantium. It is also bored vertically down the center like a bead.[18] Since the edges are beveled

[17] One carving in the opaque group that displays the carving and figure style of gems of the semi-translucent group is the bloodstone of St. George in the Cleveland Museum (no. 88). This gem is dated to the second half of the twelfth century on the basis of the shape of its shield. The gem is discussed in Chapter Four.

[18] Asen, Carder, and Nelson, *Sacred Art, Secular Context,* 59.

in the typical Byzantine manner, it seems likely that the center was bored at some later date, perhaps for a new mounting in a secondary context.

The sapphire is carved the image of Christ Pantokrator in bust. He holds the gospel book from below with his left hand, which is covered in garments. He holds his right hand in front of his body in a blessing gesture. The relief is lowest at the lower edge of the gem and grows gradually higher so that the head of Christ is rendered in the highest relief. The three-dimensionality of the head is enhanced by undercutting. The figure is self-contained and slender and his neck is slightly elongated. The face is narrow and symmetrical. Subtle modeling is used to create cheekbones and a triangle-shaped nose. The eyes are almond shaped and blank. The hair is parted down the middle and carved in a linear, pattern-like fashion. The linearity, abstraction, and slenderness of the figure typify the figure style of the gems within this series and make Christ appear spiritual and ethereal.

The carving and figure style of the sapphire of Christ at Dumbarton Oaks could easily place it within the twelfth century. Its twelfth-century dating is strengthened by the presence of the criss-cross pattern that appears on Christ's collar. Few gems contain this motif, but it is also found on the bloodstone of St. George in the Cleveland Museum (no. 88).[19] As another parallel with the sapphire, on the bloodstone the saint's garments are also represented with thick folds created by deep incisions that curve inward towards the center of the figure. The Cleveland bloodstone also displays the same figure style as the sapphire, including the elongated neck, narrow head, blank, almond-shaped eyes, and eye sockets that are delineated with deep, curved incisions. As noted in Chapter Four, the Cleveland bloodstone must date to the second half of the twelfth century because the saint holds a triangular shield. This type of shield appears in

[19] On the bloodstone in the Cleveland Museum see Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 88, no. 93.

Byzantine art only as early as the mid twelfth century.[20] The similarities in ornamentation, carving style, and figure style indicate that the Cleveland bloodstone and the Dumbarton Oaks sapphire are related and that the sapphire should also be dated to the second half of the twelfth century.

As noted earlier in this chapter, not every gem from the semi-translucent group displays the carving and figure style that is characteristic of the gems that were just described. For example, the sapphire with the image of the Crucifixion in the Kremlin Museum differs in almost every respect (no. 147).[21] The sapphire is carved with a narrative scene, instead of with a bust figure. The narrative scene required a more complex composition that necessitated different carving techniques. The relief is low and the head does not project. The figure is rendered in normal proportions, without the elongation that characterizes the dominant carving style of the semi-translucent group. The sapphire is formed into the shape of the cross, whereas most gems of the semi-translucent group are oval-shaped.

The Kremlin sapphire can be considered a gemstone crucifix, since it is takes the form of the cross. It is one of only three gemstone crucifixes in this study.[22] Gemstones were rarely carved as crucifixes because forming them into the shape of the cross required cutting away a significant portion of the material. This would have been difficult, and it may also have been considered wasteful. It is interesting that two of the three gemstone crucifixes are sapphires, which is one of the hardest gemstones other than diamond. Shaping a sapphire into the form of a crucifix must have been an especially challenging and slow process. It is tempting to suggest

[20] Grotowski, *Arms and Armour of the Warrior Saints,* 224.

[21] On this gem see Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 224-225, no. 36.

[22] One of the other crucifixes, which is set into the "Crown of St. Wencelas" in Prague, is also a sapphire (no. 33). On this gem see Wentzel, "Kameen," 922.

that the labor itself may have been considered a devotional act. If true, the act of devotion would have been made on behalf of the patron and not the craftsman, who undoubtedly could not afford a crucifix of sapphire.

Another gem that does not conform to the carving style that characterizes many of the gems of the semi-translucent group is the sapphire of the Virgin Enthroned in the Kremlin Museum (no. 75).[23] This gem is closely related to a group of bloodstones with the image of the Virgin that date to the early twelfth century, which was discussed in Chapter Four. In iconography, composition, figure style, and carving style, the sapphire is especially similar to a bloodstone of the Virgin Enthroned in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin (no. 74).[24] The sapphire is irregularly shaped in the form of a teardrop, which suggests that it was not reshaped before it was carved. It is carved with an image of the Virgin and Christ seated upon a *threnos*, or a backless throne. The Virgin has a wide, round face without a visible neck and round eyes. The folds of her garment are rendered with linear incisions that run horizontally and diagonally. The letters of the *nomina sacra* are identical in form to those of the bloodstone carvings from the early twelfth century. Therefore, in epigraphy, carving style, and figure style, the sapphire of the Virgin Enthroned is closer to the bloodstone carvings of the early twelfth century than to the gems of the semi-translucent group. It was likely carved in a workshop that predominantly worked in bloodstone.

[23] On this gem see Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 221-223, no. 35.

[24] Volbach, *Mittelalterliche Bildwerke aus Italien und Byzanz*, 125, no. 2737.

Chapter Six: The Sardonyx Group

The process of examining and dating the gems of the sardonyx group sheds light upon an important question in the historiography of Byzantine glyptics, which concerns the origin of sardonyxes with Byzantine iconography and Greek inscriptions. Although some of these have always been considered works of Byzantine art, such as the twelfth-century sardonyx with the image of Christ blessing St. George and St. Demetrios in the Cabinet des Médailles (no. 142), others have been attributed to thirteenth-century Italy and called "Italo-Byzantine" because of a theory put forth by Hans Wentzel.[1] Wentzel, whose research spanned the glyptic arts of both Byzantium and the medieval West, observed that sardonyx carving was popular in thirteenth-century Italy and was especially associated with the Hohenstaufen court. He demonstrated that the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II was depicted on several sardonyx carvings of the ruler enthroned, including one set into a reliquary cross in Prague (C1). Given the apparent Hohenstaufen preference for sardonyx, as well as the Venetian predilection for borrowing from Byzantine artistic models during the thirteenth century, Wentzel hypothesized that cameo carving was revived in Italy following the sack of Constantinople in 1204, when many Byzantine carved gemstones arrived in the West. Identifying sardonyxes with a dark figure juxtaposed against a light background as particularly characteristic of Hohenstaufen glyptics, he concluded

[1] Wentzel's theory regarding the attribution of Italo-Byzantine sardonyxes and the development of sardonyx carving in thirteenth-century Italy is discussed in Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen," 75-83; Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen in den Sammlungen Italiens," 239-253; Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 92-93; Wentzel, "Kameen," 919-922; Hans Wentzel, "Die Kamee mit dem hl. Georg im Schloss zu Windsor," in *Festschrift Friedrich Gerke: Kunsthistorische Studien,* ed. J.A. Schmoll gen. Eisenwerth (Baden-Baden: Holle-Verlag, 1962), 103-112. For more recent scholarship on sardonyx carving in the medieval West, including a review of Wentzel's scholarship, see Rainer Kahsnitz, "Staufische Kameen" in *Die Zeit der Staufer: Geschichte, Kunst, Kultur: Katalog der Ausstellung (Stuttgart, Altes Schloss und Kunstgebäude, 26. März-5. Juni 1977),* vol. 5, ed. Reiner Hausscher (Stuttgart: Württembergisches Landesmuseum, 1977), 477-520.

that sardonyxes with Byzantine iconography and Greek inscriptions in the "dark-light" compositional style were Italian works of the thirteenth century that were based on Byzantine models. Given Wentzel's status as the authority in the study of medieval glyptics, his theory resulted in the attribution of most medieval sardonyx carvings to thirteenth-century Italy, even for some that display stylistic characteristics and iconography that are clearly Byzantine.[2]

Other scholars, notably Alisa Bank, Paul Williamson, and Mathilde Avisseau-Broustet, have complicated Wentzel's categorization of carved sardonyxes by demonstrating that individual works that he had preciously attributed to medieval Italy are instead Byzantine. Their scholarship has demonstrated that a preferable method of attribution is to evaluate each piece individually, taking into account iconographic and stylistic factors and comparisons with carved gemstones of both Byzantium and the medieval West.[3]

In 1975 Alisa Bank published an article on the two sardonyx carvings with the image of Daniel between the lions in the Hermitage Museum (nos. 93, 95).[4] She identified stylistic differences between them and questioned whether they could both be Italian pieces that were produced in a byzantinizing style. She concluded that if the sardonyx that displays a dark-light composition is an Italian work, in accordance with Wentzel's theory, then the other, which displays color gradations, lower relief, and a different figure style, could be Byzantine, albeit of a

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[2] For example, even after a discussion of the byzantinizing features of the sardonyx with the image of John the Baptist in the Hermitage Museum, Alisa Bank attributed it to thirteenth-century Italy on the basis of Wentzel's theory. See Bank, "Vier byzantinisierende Kameen aus der Ermitage," 11-14.

[3] Ibid., 11-16; Alisa Bank, "Sur le probleme de la glyptique italo-byzantine," *Rivista di studi bizantini e slavi* 3 (1983): 311-318; Paul Williamson, "Daniel between the lions: a new sardonyx cameo for the British Museum," *Jewellery Studies* 1 (1983-4): 37-39, and Mathilde Avisseau-Broustet, "Le morcellement de l'Empire romain d'Orient," in *1204, la quatrième croisade: de Blois à Constantinople & éclats d'empires,* ed. Inès Villela-Petit (Paris: Société française d'héraldique et de sigillographie, 2005), 227-229, no. 36.

[4] Bank, "Vier byzantinisierende Kameen aus der Ermitage," 13-16.

provincial origin. She ended the article with the proposal that more work must be done on provenance of the sardonyxes in question, betraying a sense of uncertainty regarding the soundness of Wentzel's conclusions.

Eight years later in 1983, Bank revisited the question of the Italo-Byzantine sardonyxes in an article fully dedicated to the topic.[5] She noted that there are enough gems with the iconographic theme of Daniel between the lions to form a group, although their origins and relationship with one another is not clear. She tentatively proposed that they could belong to the thirteenth century, while admitting that they are difficult to date and place due to a lack of datable comparative works. Regarding the question of their origin, Bank expressed strong doubt that they could be works of thirteenth-century Italy, noting that their only parallel with medieval Italian sardonyxes is the compositional aspect of the dark figure upon a light background. Further, she pointed out that even in an exhibition of the art of the Hohenstaufen Court, which Wentzel organized along with Rainer Kahsnitz, no Italo-Byzantine sardonyxes were included. She reasoned that this omission suggested that even Wentzel may have doubted the strength of his attributions.[6] Bank's article ends without a definitive conclusion as to the date and origin of the sardonyxes, but she proposed that future researchers should investigate which culture placed the most importance upon the cult of the prophet Daniel.[7] What is especially important for this discussion is that Bank's article succeeds in calling the entirety of Wentzel's theory into question.

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[5] Bank, "Sur le probleme de la glyptique italo-byzantine," 311-318.

[6] On the exhibition catalogue see Reiner Hausscher, ed. *Die Zeit der Staufer: Geschichte, Kunst, Kultur: Katalog der Ausstellung (Stuttgart, Altes Schloss und Kunstgebäude, 26. März-5. Juni 1977),* vols. 1-5.

[7] Bank, "Sur le probleme de la glyptique italo-byzantine," 316-318.

One year after Bank published her article on Italo-Byzantine glyptics, Paul Williamson of the Victoria and Albert Museum published a short article in *Jewellery Studies* on the topic of the same group of sardonyx carvings of Daniel between the lions. His article was inspired by the British Museum's recent acquisition of one such gem (no. 97).[8] As Bank had done in her article of 1975, Williamson identified a number of stylistic differences between the sardonyxes with elongated, dark figures carved in high relief against a light background, exemplified by Hermitage no. ш-368 (no. 93), and the sardonyxes exemplified by Hermitage no. ш-360 (no. 95), which are carved in lower relief with figures in stockier proportions. He concluded that the former group, with its narrow and elongated figure style, compares best to Byzantine gems of the eleventh and twelfth centuries and should therefore be considered Byzantine with an origin in Constantinople. Showing an allegiance to Wentzel's theory, he maintained that the latter group of sardonyxes carved in shallow relief, which included the new British Museum sardonyx, could be Italian in origin.[9] Interestingly, his conclusion is the opposite as the one put forth by Bank in her first article on Italo-Byzantine glyptics. He did not cite her more recent article, which suggests that he was unaware of her analysis of the same topic. Although Bank and Williamson arrived at different conclusions, their arguments converge on two points. The first is that at least some sardonyxes of the Italo-Byzantine group are Byzantine, and the second is that Wentzel's simple method of categorizing dark-light sardonyxes as Italian must be revised.

The articles of Williamson and Bank demonstrate the importance of evaluating each piece individually instead of simply grouping all sardonyx carvings together based upon one shared characteristic. To this point, in two catalogues publications in which a single sardonyx was analyzed and attributed, the authors disagreed with Wentzel's attributions and argued for a

[8] On the gem see Williamson, "Daniel between the lions," 37.

[9] Ibid., 37-39.

Byzantine provenance. Mathilde Avisseau-Broustet attributed the sardonyx with the image of St. Theodore in the Cabinet des Médailles to Byzantium and dated it to the eleventh or twelfth century (no. 195). She pointed out that the iconography, style, and composition of the piece is more characteristic of with Byzantine gems of the eleventh and twelfth centuries than with the thirteenth-century sardonyxes of Italy.[10] The author of the catalogue *Dagli ori antichi agli anni Venti: le collezioni di Riccardo Gualino* was also unable to reconcile Wentzel's theory with the stylistic and iconographic characteristics of the sardonyx of Daniel in the Galleria Sabauda in Turin (no. 92). She preferred see it as a Byzantine work of thirteenth-century Constantinople.[11]

By building upon the work of Bank, Williamson, and Avisseau-Broustet, it becomes clear that some of the sardonyx carvings that were formerly attributed to medieval Italy should be re-claimed for Byzantium. Sardonyx was highly valued for gem carving in antiquity because of its distinct stone bands that, according to Pliny, became less valuable if any of the layers were not clearly defined.[12] The Byzantines appreciated the aesthetic of carved, banded stone as well. They used liturgical patens and chalices that were carved of banded onyx, and kept several large sardonyx cameos from ancient Rome in the imperial treasury.[13] Sardonyx carvings from the early Byzantine period continued to be worn in the middle Byzantine period as *enkolpia*.[14] There

[10] Avisseau-Broustet, "Le morcellement de l'Empire romain d'Orient," 227-229 no. 36.

[11] Giovanna Castagnoli, *Dagli ori antichi agli anni Venti: le collezioni di Riccardo Gualino* (Milan: Electa, 1982), 229, no. 42.

[12] Pliny the Elder, "Book XXXVI: The Natural History of Stones," 419, chap. 23.

[13] On the Roman cameos in the imperial treasury see Mango and Mango, "Cameos in Byzantium," 58-62. On liturgical objects carved of onyx see Buckton, *The Treasury of San Marco*, 286-291 no. 42 and 194-195 no. 25.

[14] This is evident from the seventh-century sardonyx of the Annunciation in the Cabinet des Médailles that was carved on the reverse with the theme of the *deesis* in the tenth century. See Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 277, no. 184.

is no reason that the Byzantines would not continue to carve sardonyxes for use as *enkolpia* in the middle and late Byzantine periods.

The sardonyx carved with the image of St. Nicholas in the Kremlin is an example of a sardonyx carved in high relief that can be firmly attributed to Byzantium on the basis of its iconography, caring style, and most of all, its medieval frame (no. 103).[15] The piece is carved from a thick stone with two layers. St. Nicholas is represented in the dark, golden-brown stone while the background stone is white. The piece could theoretically be an exemplar of Wentzel's "dark-light" group, but it has always considered separately from other sardonyxes and attributed to a workshop in Constantinople. Its Byzantine attribution is considered secure because it displays an iconographic theme that is clearly Byzantine and because it is stylistically similar to two blue chalcedony carvings of St. Nicholas in the Louvre and in the Vladimir and Suzdal Museum of History, Art, and Architecture (nos. 101, 102).[16] Scholars have also noted that the frame is clearly medieval and may be contemporary with the gem, but they have disagreed on its dating and attribution. Alisa Bank dated the frame to the twelfth century but suggested that it could be Russian.[17] Marvin Ross dated the frame to the late tenth or eleventh century and attributed it to Constantinople, noting its similarities with the metalwork of the reliquary of Sainte Chapelle in the Louvre. At the time that he was writing, the reliquary of Sainte Chapelle had been dated to the late tenth or eleventh century, but it is now considered a work of the

[15] Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 123, no. 636.

[16] Ibid.; Bank, *Prikladnoe Iskusstvo Vizantii,* 136; Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 231-233, no. 39; Ross, "Three Byzantine Cameos," 43-44, no. 1. On the blue chalcedony of St. Nicholas in the Louvre see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance*, 287, no. 201. On the blue chalcedony of St. Nicholas in Vladimir-Suzdal see Pucko, "Neskol'ko vizantijskich kamej iz drevnerusskich gorodov," 129-130, no. 12.

[17] Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 123, no. 636 and Bank, *Prikladnoe Iskusstvo Vizantii,* 136, no. 120.

second half of the twelfth century.[18] In a recent publication, I. A. Sterligova reviewed the scholarly opinions on the dating and attribution of the frame, although she did not offer an opinion of her own. She did, however, date the gem to the late Byzantine period based upon the belief that sardonyxes were carved during the Palaeologian period as part of a classical revival.[19]

In Chapter Five, I demonstrated that the two chalcedony carvings of St. Nicholas are part of a series of semi-translucent gems that date to between 1100 and 1204. Based upon its similarities with the chalcedony carvings, the sardonyx of St. Nicholas should be dated to the twelfth century as well. This dating makes the carving contemporary with its frame, if one accepts that Bank was correct in dating it to the eleventh or twelfth century and that Ross was correct in comparing it with the twelfth-century reliquary in the Louvre. With so much evidence tying the sardonyx of St. Nicholas to the middle Byzantine period, it is highly unlikely that it could be a work of thirteenth-century Italy. It therefore serves as evidence that sardonyxes in the dark-light style were carved in Byzantium.

Another gem that is still mounted in its original Byzantine frame is also a sardonyx carved in the dark-light style. This sardonyx, which is located in the Vatopedi Monastery, depicts St. George (no. 83).[20] The saint is represented standing and clad in armor. He holds a spear with his right hand and rests his left hand on a round shield. An officer's sash is wrapped around his chest. The background of the stone is a milky white and the relief is a golden brown color. The figure is carved in low relief. The carving technique has some parallels with the

[18] Ross, "Three Byzantine Cameos," 43-44 no. 1. A more recent publication has placed the reliquary of Sainte Chapelle in the second half of the twelfth century. See Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium,* 440-441.

[19] Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities*, 231-233, no. 39.

[20] Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 43-44.

sardonyx of the Archangel Michael in the Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel (no. 91).[21] On both gems, certain parts of the figure such as the legs and the feet are rendered with flat shapes delineated with linear incisions. The sardonyx of St. George is set into a Byzantine frame that dates to the eleventh or twelfth centuries.[22] The gem's iconography, carvings style, Byzantine frame, and presence at the isolated Orthodox monastery speak to the likelihood that it is of a Byzantine origin.[23] It can be upheld, therefore, as another example that contradicts Wentzel's theory that sardonyxes in the dark-light style should be attributed to medieval Italy.

Provenance research can often be a useful tool in determining the origin of a work of art, but unfortunately the information that is available for the sardonyxes in this study does not shed light upon their place of origin. The provenance history simply doesn't go back far enough. Most of the sardonyxes were part of the large gem collections that belonged to wealthy European aristocrats and rulers. Their provenance history therefore begins in the late seventeenth or eighteenth centuries, when they are first recorded as part of those collections. For example, most of the sardonyxes in the Hermitage Museum can only be traced back to 1787, at which time the Russian Empress Catherine II acquired the large gem collection of the French Duke of Orleans.[24] This information is only useful in the respect that it indicates that the gems were in France before they were in Russia; it does not indicate where they were carved, when they entered the collection of the Duke of Orleans, or even whether they are medieval.

More specific provenance information is available for several gems that were not part of European gem collections. A description of the *panagia* of Patriarch Philareten in the inventory

[21] Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 92, no. 83.

[22] Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 43-44n8.

[23] Ibid., 43-44.

[24] Piotrovskiĭ, *Treasures of Catherine the Great*, 15-16.

of the Patriarch's Treasury in Russia identifies it as the *panagia* with the Transfiguration sardonyx that is now in the Hermitage (C11). A *panagia* is a pendant with a holy image that was worn, much like an *enkolpion,* by a bishop of the Russian Orthodox Church. Patriarch Philareten was patriarch from 1609 to 1633, and the inventory record therefore provides a *terminus ante quem* for the Transfiguration sardonyx in the early seventeenth century.[25] The sardonyx with the image of the Crucifixion in the Kremlin is set into a Russian *panagia* that dates to 1589, and, like the *panagia* of Patriarch Philaretin, it was kept in the Patriarch's Treasury until it was later moved to the Chudov Monastery (no. 12).[26] The sardonyx with the image of Daniel between the lions in Cividale is mounted into the "La Pace Grimani," a liturgical object that was used for the ritual of the kiss of peace (no. 96). The Grimani pax dates to the sixteenth century and is kept in the Cathedral of Cividale.[27] An even earlier provenance can be determined for the sardonyx with the image of the Archangel Michael that is set into the crown of Napoleon at the Louvre (C12). Records indicate that this sardonyx was previously set into the reliquary of St. Benoit that was offered to the church of St. Denis by the Duc du Berry in 1401.[28] Although these records shed light upon the continued life of sardonyx carvings as they were collected, reset, and reused in locations and contexts throughout the world, they also speak to the impossibility of using provenance information to identify their origin.

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[25] Yuri Piatnitsky, "Панагия с камеей "Преображение" из коллекции Эрмитажа = Panagia with 'The Transfiguration' Cameo from the Hermitage Collection (In Russian with English Resume)," in *Vizantiia i vizantiĭskie traditsii: sbornik nauchnykh trudov*, ed. V. N. Zalesskaia (Saint Petersburg: Gos. Ėrmitazh, 1996), 237.

[26] Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii*, vol. 2, 126, no. 649.

[27] G. Menis, "Un malnoto cammeo cividalese con Daniele fra i leoni vestito alla persima," *Rivista di archeologia cristiana* 49 (1973): 184-186.

[28] Guillou and Durand, *Byzance*, 288.

In the following discussion I will analyze the sardonyx carvings in four groups. The first and second groups are comprised of dark figure sardonyxes in high relief. The third group is made up of sardonyxes carved in medium relief that share a similar carving and figure style. The fourth group contains small stones that are carved with flat forms and figures that are stocky. Taking into account carving style, iconography, and inscriptions, I will attribute each piece to either Byzantium or the medieval West and provide a dating rationale for those that I determine are Byzantine.

Group 1: Sardonyx Carvings in High Relief

The sardonyxes in this group are carved in high relief. Most are in the dark-light style in which the figure is carved in dark stone and the background stone is white. The gems in this group are three sardonyxes with the image of Daniel (nos. 92, 93, 114), a sardonyx with the image of the Archangel Michael (no. 91), and a sardonyx with the image of St. George in the (no. 90).[29] My analysis will demonstrate that all of these gems are Byzantine works that were carved in Constantinople in the twelfth century.

The first and most striking observation regarding these sardonyxes is that they have a close stylistic and iconographic relationship with Byzantine gems from the semi-translucent

[29] The sardonyxes of Daniel are located in the Galleria Sabauda, the Hermitage Museum, and the Vatopedi Monstery. See Castagnoli, *Dagli ori antichi agli anni Venti,* 229, no. 42; Bank, "Sur le probleme de la glyptique italo-byzantine," 316, no. 6; Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 52-53, no. 13. The sardonyx of the Archangel Michael is located in the Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel. See Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 93, no. 83. The sardonyx of S. George is located in the Bargello Museum in Florence. See Paola Barocchi, *Arti del Medio Evo e del Rinascimento: omaggio ai Carrand, 1889-1989: Museo nazionale del Bargello, 20 marzo-25 giugno 1989* (Florence: Studio per edizioni scelte, 1989), 265, no. 50.

group that date to the twelfth century.[30] Carvers working in sardonyx may have followed the same technical and stylistic conventions that were used for carving semi-translucent gemstones because the material of sardonyx offered similar challenges and possibilities. The main goal of carvers working in sardonyx was to form an image in at least two layers of colored stone. Formal and stylistic decisions such as the height of the relief, the compositional form, and the degree of plastic modeling were all dependent upon the shape and composition of the stone and its layers. Just as carvers working with semi-translucent gems sought to preserve as much of the precious material as possible, leading them to carve in high relief with minimal, carefully placed incisions, carvers working in sardonyx tried to use the entire top layer of stone in all of its depth in order to amplify the visual effects of the multi-layered stone. In particular, they tried to achieve a striking contrast between the milky white background and the dark figure that emerges in high relief. Working in high relief in glossy, glass-like stone that was sometimes semi-translucent around the edges, carvers working in sardonyx adopted the carving methods that were used for semi-translucent stones. This is why aspects of carving and figure style that are characteristic of gems from the semi-translucent group, such as elongated narrow forms, high relief, and almond-shaped eyes, can also be observed on sardonyx carvings.

Although it is clear that the sardonyxes of this group have stylistic and technical parallels with gems of the middle Byzantine period, it must also be asked how closely they relate to the Hohenstaufen sardonyx carvings of thirteenth-century Italy. Some of the sardonyxes that Wentzel had attributed to thirteenth-century Italy have since been re-dated, but one of his attributions that has survived scrutiny is the sardonyx with the enthroned ruler in the reliquary

[30] This stylistic similarity was noted by Paul Williamson, who used it as the basis for attributing the sardonyxes of Daniel in Turin and the Hermitage to Byzantium and dating them to the eleventh or twelfth centuries. See Williamson, "Daniel between the lions," 37-39.

cross of Prague (C1).[31] This piece may therefore serve as an example of a Hohenstaufen sardonyx of the thirteenth-century Italy in the dark-figure style. This gem measures 3.8 cm high and is oval in shape. The background is of white stone and the relief ranges in color from a light honey-colored brown to dark brown, depending on its height. A thin stone frame is carved from the brown layer of stone. Reverse perspective is employed so that the height of the relief varies depending upon where a form is intended to be represented in space. Forms carved in low relief, such as the back of the throne, are meant to be understood as existing farther back while the highest relief is used for forms in the foreground, such as the figure's legs. This manner of representing three-dimensional space and distributing the height of relief contrasts with Byzantine carving techniques, in which the relief is highest for the representation of heads. Another contrast can be identified in figure style. The sardonyx carvings in this group display a figure style in which the figure is slender and elegant and the heads are narrow and carved in high relief. In contrast, the figure of the ruler on the Italian sardonyx in Prague has a wide head with round cheeks and a thick neck. It is carved in relief of medium height. This comparison has demonstrated that the sardonyxes in this group differed from the thirteenth-century Hohenstaufen sardonyx of the ruler enthroned in carving style, figure style, and compositional approach. They are, instead, more similar to Byzantine gems of the twelfth century.

The sardonyx carvings in high relief also display some of the iconographic themes that appear on Byzantine carvings from the semi-translucent group. For example, there are iconographic and formal similarities among sardonyx and semi-translucent gems with the image

[31] Wentzel convincingly demonstrated that the image on this gem is a portrait of Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II. See Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen, Versuch einer Grundlegung," 75-78 and Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen in den Sammlungen Italiens," 245. Some of Wentzel's attributions have been questioned by Rainer Kahsnitz, who has placed some of the sardonyxes carved with images of animals and classical themes in later centuries. See Kahsnitz, "Staufische Kameen," 502-514.

of the Archangel Michael (nos. 91, 98, 99).[32] On each of these three carvings, the Archangel Michael is depicted standing with a sword over his right shoulder and a scabbard clutched in his left hand. The figure is carved in high relief. It is slender and angled slightly to the right. In contrast, when this iconographic theme is represented on bloodstones, the Archangel is represented frontally and has a more stocky appearance. This holds true for bloodstones that were carved at any point in the middle Byzantine period, including the eleventh-century piece in the Cabinet des Médailles and the late twelfth-century piece in the Walters Art Gallery (nos. 46, 129).[33] This suggests that the differences in representation can be attributed to different approaches to materials rather than to stylistic changes that occurred over time. Carvers working in sardonyx and semi-translucent gemstones tried to achieve high relief in order to use as much as the stone as possible. Those working in bloodstone, which was dark and opaque, relied upon techniques designed to make the figure clearly visible, including linear incisions and the carving of wide forms that were easily recognizable.

While impossible to prove, it can be speculated that the sardonyx and chalcedony carvings with the image of the Archangel Michael could be late twelfth-century gems that were associated with the ruling Angeloi Dynasty. Although emperors had been compared with angels in flattering panegyrics for many years, the Angeloi positioned themselves as especially close to

[32] The gems with the image of the Archangel Michael are the blue chalcedony in the reliquary cross in Prague, the blue chalcedony in the Buch Chalice at the Hillwood Museum, and the sardonyx in the Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel. On the sardonyx of the Archangel Michael see Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 92 no. 83. On the chalcedony of the Archangel Michael in Prague, see Bauer, "The Reliquary coronation Cross from St. Vitus Treasury," 3. I have been unable to find a publication that addresses the chalcedony carving in the Buch Chalice of the Hillwood Mansion directly, but the chalice is published in Karen Kettering, "The Northern Palmyra: Saint Petersburg at Three Hundred," *The Magazine Antiquities* 163.3 (2003): 98.

[33] On the gem in the Cabinet des Médailles, see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 280, no. 189. On the gem in the Vatopedi Monastery see Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 50-51, no. 13.

the angels because of the meaning of their family name. Emperor Isaac II Angelos, who placed the image of the Archangel Michael on his coin, was praised by Theodore Balsamon as "angelic grace, an angelic protection, and the chief of angels."[34] These emperors would have been especially likely to own *enkolpia* set with gems carved with the image of the Archangel Michael.

The sardonyx in the Bargello Museum is carved with the image of St. George (no. 90).[35] The saint is represented standing and turning slightly to his left. He wears the muscled cuirass, a type of body armor that appears most often in images of warrior saints in the ninth and tenth centuries, but that can also be found in images from the eleventh and twelfth centuries.[36] A long cloak reaches almost to his ankles and comes to a point behind his feet. It is clasped at the neck with a circular clasp. The saint wears a piece of lower body protection that is difficult to identify. It appears to be a type of *ptyrges*, a skirt of pieces of leather or armor that protected the lower body.[37] In most representations the "feathers" of the skirt are cut at a forty-five degree angle and hang loosely, but on the sardonyx in the Bargello the feathers are rectangular and hug the body closely. The *ptyrges* is represented in this way on carved gemstones of the twelfth century, including those with the image of the Archangel Michael that were just discussed, as well as the sardonyx with Christ blessing St. George and St. Demetrios in the Cabinet des Médailles (no. 142).[38] The sardonyx is inscribed with a Greek inscription with the saint's name.

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[34] Henry Maguire, "The Heavenly Court," in *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204*, ed. Henry Maguire (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1977), 252.

[35] Barocchi, *Arti del Medio Evo e del Rinascimento,* 265, no. 50.

[36] Grotowski, *Arms and Armour of the Warrior Saints,* 130.

[37] Ibid., 162-163.

[38] On the gem in the Cabinet des Médailles, see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 282-283, no. 193.

The iconography of the saint's weaponry requires further discussion. He holds a sword over his shoulder in his right hand, and in his left hand he holds a scabbard. Although the way in which the saint holds the sword it is typical of Byzantine representations of warrior saints, the scabbard that he holds in his left hand is associated with the image of the Archangel Michael. Warrior saints usually hold a shield instead of a scabbard. The figure of St. George on the Bargello sardonyx therefore appears very much like the figure of the Archangel Michael on Byzantine sardonyxes and semi-translucent gemstones (nos. 91, 98, 99). Otherwise, however, the figure of St. George on the Bargello sardonyx is a typical Byzantine representation of a warrior saint. For example, with his right arm angled out sharply to the side, his sword held over his shoulder, his muscular legs, and his slender head and neck, he resembles the standing figure of St. George on the twelfth-century sardonyx of Christ blessing St. George and St. Demetrios in the Cabinet des Médailles (no. 142).

The carving and figure style of the sardonyx of St. George also has parallels with Byzantine gems of the semi-translucent group. The figure is carved in high relief that, coupled with the contrast between the dark figure and the light background, gives it a statuesque quality. The figure is slender, yet the muscles are articulated with contours. The neck is long and the head is narrow. The eyes are blank and lined with thick lids and the hair is rendered in tight curls. In facial type especially, the saint resembles the figure of St. George on the sapphire in the Kunsthistorisches Museum (no. 84).[39] In particular, both figures have narrow necks, slender heads, blank eyes set into thick, lined lids, and hair knotted into tight curls. The sapphire of St. George dates to the eleventh or twelfth century and is attributed to Constantinople. The sardonyx of St. George should be dated to the same general period, although a more precise

[39] Eichler and Kris, *Die Kameen im Kunsthistorischen Museum,* 95-96, no. 130.

dating to the twelfth century is preferred because it should be considered of the same approximate date as the gems with the image of the Archangel Michael (nos. 91, 98, 99).

Two other sardonyx carvings can be dated to the twelfth century on the basis of their closeness with the sardonyx of St. George in the Bargello Museum. They are the sardonyxes of Daniel between the lions in the Galleria Sabauda of Turin and in the Hermitage (nos. 92, 93).[40] Their style, inscriptions, and compositional format indicate that they are related to one another as well as to other Byzantine gems. Both are carved with a Greek inscription in which the word "prophet" is formed in a monogram and placed to the left and the name Daniel is spelled out completely and placed to the right.[41] This inscription appears with other middle Byzantine representations of Daniel, including an eleventh-century mosaic at Hosios Loukas and a twelfth-century illumination in a prophet book in the Bodleian Library.[42] The presence of the Greek monogram on both sardonyxes argues against the possibility that they were produced in the West.

The iconographic theme of Daniel between the lions originates in early Christian art. Its association with salvation made the theme especially popular in sepulchral art, and it was frequently represented on sarcophagi.[43] The iconographic theme of Daniel between the lions was preserved well into the medieval period in both Byzantium and the medieval West. In

[40] On the Hermitage sardonyx (inv. no. ш-368) see Bank, "Vier byzantinisierende Kameen aus der Ermitage," 14. On the sardonyx in Turin see Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen in den Sammlungen Italiens," 225, no. 26 and Castagnoli, *Dagli ori antichi agli Venti*, 229, no. 42.

[41] The inscription is sketched out in Bank, "Vier byzantinisierende Kameen aus der Ermitage," 14.

[42] On the mosaic in Hosios Loukas see Paul Lazarides, *The Monastery of Hosios Lukas: Brief Illustrated Archaeological Guide*. (Athens: Hannibal, 1980) 52, no. 35. On the illumination in the prophet book in the Bodleian Library (Bodl. Laud. gr. 30A, f 395v) see John Lowden, *Illuminated Prophet Books: a Study of Byzantine Manuscripts of the Major and Minor Prophets* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1988), 25, no. 53.

[43] See, for example, the image of Daniel between the lions on a sarcophagus in Ravenna in W. H. Goodyear, *Roman and Medieval Art* (Meadville, Pa: Flood and Vincent, 1893), 84.

Byzantium, the theme was represented occasionally in illuminated manuscripts, steatite pendants, and lead seals.[44]

On the two sardonyx carvings, Daniel is depicted frontally with his arms stretched out in the orant pose. Two small lions frame him on either side, achieving a pattern-like symmetry as they hug the lower curves of the gem. The lions are represented in an abstract and abbreviated manner. On the gem in Turin, the lions' tails are omitted. The sardonyxes of Daniel between the lions are similar to the sardonyx of St. George in carving and figure style. They are carved so that the dark figure emerges in high relief against a background of glossy white stone. The figures are slender and have long necks and narrow heads. They are turned slightly at an angle. The figure of St. George on the sardonyx in Florence is also slightly turned, as are the figures of the Archangel Michael on the sardonyx and chalcedony carvings. It is possible that the positioning of the figures was affected by the form and shape of the stones, but it is more likely that the figures were represented with a slight turn in order to animate them with a sense of movement.

Iconographic elements that link the two sardonyxes of Daniel with the sardonyx of St. George include the representation of the cloak and the feet. On all three gems the cloak is gathered at the center of the breast and falls to a point behind the figures' legs. The folds are depicted with linear incisions and crisp, angled corners. The feet are represented in a simple and abbreviated manner. Since they compare so closely with the sardonyx of St. George in the Bargello, the sardonyxes with the image of Daniel between the lions should also be dated to the twelfth century and attributed to Constantinople.

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[44] For the illumination in the manuscript in the Bodleian library, see Lowden, *Illuminated Prophet books,* 25, no. 33. For a seal with the image of Daniel between the lions see Bank, *Byzantine Art in the Collection of Soviet Museums*, no. 171 (unnumbered plate). For a steatite with the image of Daniel between the lions see Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 145, no. 107.

A sardonyx with the image of Daniel in the Vatopedi Monastery is related to those in Turin and the Hermitage (no. 114).[45] The iconography differs, however, as Daniel is represented in bust form, holding an open scroll. The figure is slender, the neck is long, and the head is narrow. The narrowness of the head is accentuated by the Phrygian cap, which narrows to a rounded point. The gem is inscribed in Greek with the word "prophet" arranged in a monogram form. The figure has blank, almond shaped eyes, narrow shoulders, and a cloak that fastens at the center of the breast with a large, circular clasp. The piece compares most closely with the sapphire of St. Demetrios in Kassel, which dates to the late twelfth or early thirteenth century (no. 112).[46] The sardonyx of Daniel should be dated to the same period.

Group 2: The Sardonyx Carvings in Kassel

The Byzantine sardonyx carvings considered thus far have been relatively easy to attribute and date due to their stylistic and iconographic closeness with other gems from the middle Byzantine period. The second group to be considered is comprised of four sardonyx carvings in the Museumslandscaft Hessen Kassel that have iconographic and stylistic peculiarities that make them difficult to date and attribute (nos. 196-199).[47] They are thought to have been among the gems that were sold by Venetian nobleman Antonion Cappello to Karl V,

[45] Brigitte Pitarakis dates this work to the twelfth century on the basis of its similarity with the sardonyx carvings of Daniel in Turin and the Hermitage, following Paul Williamson's theory that they should be dated to the eleventh or twelfth centuries. See Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 52-53.

[46] On the sapphire in Kassel see Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 90, no. 87.

[47] On the Kassel sardonyxes see ibid., 92-93.

the ruler of Hessen-Kassel, in the year 1700.[48] Given that their provenance can be traced with reasonable certainty to the year 1700, they are considered genuine.

The sardonyxes are carved from stone that is strikingly thick and comprised of three layers. The lowest layer is a dark, brownish-grey color. The middle layer, which serves as the background of the composition, is a white stone. The top layer from which the relief is carved is of a golden brown hue. The figure is rendered in high relief and protrudes well away from the background, yet most of the carving is contained to the same plane. The sardonyxes relate so closely to each other that they are likely to be from the same workshop.

The four sardonyxes in Kassel differ considerably from other medieval sardonyx carvings. Hans Wentzel proposed that they could be Italian works or that they might have been carved in a provincial Byzantine workshop.[49] It is, however, fairly certain that the sardonyxes are not from medieval Italy as they lack the figure style, iconography, and facial types that are typical of the Hohenstaufen gems. Their iconic frontality, Greek inscriptions, and iconography suggest that they are Byzantine, but their date and location of production are difficult to determine. They are stylistically isolated, the quality of the carving is somewhat low, and they display iconographic peculiarities. All of these factors suggest that they are provincial works that date to the late Byzantine period. It is not possible to identify the province in which they originated.

The sardonyx with the image of Christ Emmanuel displays some continuity with the carving styles and techniques of twelfth-century sardonyxes (no. 197). For example, a comparison can be made with the sardonyx of St. George in the Vatopedi Monastery (no. 83).

[48] Hans Möbius, "Kameenschmuck im Hessischen Landesmuseum zu Kassel," 53; Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel, 88.

[49] Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 92.

On both works the figures have flat faces, full lips, teardrop shaped noses, smooth almond shaped eyes with no pupil, and round, full cheeks. The drapery is rendered in an abbreviated and somewhat abstract manner with linear incisions. The figure of Christ on the Kassel gem also has a narrow head and a long neck, which recalls the figure style of the twelfth-century Byzantine sardonyxes and semi-translucent gemstones. The elongation of the neck on the Kassel gem is so amplified, however, that it appears attenuated.

The iconography of the gem is also unusual. Some of the typical iconographic attributes of the Emmanuel are present, such as Christ's youthful, beardless face and his combed back hair. Christ holds a gospel book instead of a scroll, however, and his left hand is covered by garments in the same manner as it is in Pantokrator images. It appears that the upper half of the figure represents Christ Emmanuel while the lower half of the figure is drawn from the image of Christ Pantokrator. The gem is inscribed in Greek with the *nomina sacra* of Christ and does not include the title of Emmanuel. The unusual substitution of the gospel book for the scroll and the mannered figure style suggest that the gem is of a provincial origin and dates to the late Byzantine period.

The other sardonyx in the Kassel group with the image of Christ depicts Christ Pantokrator (no. 199). The gem is inscribed in Greek with Christ's *nomina sacra*. This piece cannot be dated by its iconography, as the bust image of Christ is one of the most ubiquitous images of Byzantine art. Its carving style is unusual. The stone is extremely thick and the figure of Christ protrudes in high relief. Despite the height of the relief, the carving is shallow so that most of the modeled forms are contained to the same plane. Only the gospel book, blessing hand, forehead, and chin protrude in higher relief. The figure and garments are carved with linear incisions that have a pattern-like appearance. These carving techniques result in a figure

that is highly abstracted, although the forms do remain proportional and coherent. The only carved gemstone that offers a close comparison is the sardonyx with the image of Christ in the Content Collection (no. 195).[50] The piece is probably contemporary with the sardonyxes in Kassel.

One of the sardonyxes in Kassel is carved with the image of the prophet Daniel represented in bust (no. 198). The gem is inscribed in Greek with the word "prophet" in the monogram form. The figure is carved in high relief. He holds an open scroll that is inscribed with Greek letters. I was unable to decipher the letters on this gem, but on a similar carving in the Cabinet des Médailles the scroll is inscribed with a reference to Daniel's apocalyptic prophecies.[51] The mannered tilt of the figure's head and the twist of his body are characteristic of late Byzantine representations of Daniel, such as the bloodstone in the Trinity Sergius Monastery (no. 188).[52]

The fourth sardonyx of the Kassel group is carved with an image of St. John the Baptist (no. 196). The saint is represented standing. He holds a cross-topped staff in his right hand and an open scroll in his left hand. The Greek inscription, in which the name "John" is abbreviated and the word "Prodromos" is spelled out, is in the form that appears most often on Byzantine gems with the image of John the Baptist.[53] The Baptist is represented wearing a full-length

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[50] Henig, *The Content Family Collection of Ancient Cameos*, 121, no. 193.

[51] Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 438-439, no. 330.

[52] On the bloodstone of Daniel see Jurgenson, "Zur Frage des Charakters der byzantinischen Plastik während der palaiologenzeit," 271-272; Andreevich Il′in, *Zagorsk: Trinity Sergius Monastery* (Moscow: Sovietsky Khudozhnik Pub. House, 1967), 50, nos. 36 and 37.

[53] Α(γιος) Ι(ωάννης) Ο ΠΡΟΔΡΟΜΟC

sheepskin garment that extends to his ankles.[54] This iconographic detail is unusual on carved gemstones, as the Baptist is normally represented wearing a *chiton* that is slung across a bare chest. The full-length sheepskin garment appears on images of the Baptist from the late Byzantine period. Comparative examples include steatite icons in the Kremlin and the Staatliche Museen in Berlin, a gold *enkolpion* in the Vatopedi Monastery, and the thirteenth-century lead seal of Theodore Panegures.[55] The image of John the Baptist wearing a sheepskin garment also appears in Serbian painting from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, including a fresco in the Gračanica monastery in Kosovo.[56] These iconographic comparisons allow for the dating of the sardonyx in Kassel to the late Byzantine period.

Group 3: Sardonyx Carvings in Medium Relief

The six sardonyxes in this group are carved in relief that is low to medium in height. Most display color modeling that is achieved by incorporating thin segments of the top layer of stone. They have a carved stone frame, a flat, glossy, monochromatic background, Greek inscriptions, and Byzantine iconography.[57] Some display a dark figure against a light background, and others show the reverse. Most of these gems have always been considered

[54] The garment has been identified and discussed in Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 126.

[55] On the *enkolpion* see ibid., 126, no. 44. On the steatites see Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 191, no. 111 and 238, no. 174. On the seal see I. Jordanov, *Corpus of Byzantine Seals from Bulgaria*, vol. 2 (Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 2006), no. 554.

[56] Natalia B. Teteriatnikov, "The Mosaics of the Eastern Arch of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople: Program and Liturgy," *Gesta* 52.1 (2013): 79, no. 18.

[57] The carved frame of the sardonyx of the Virgin Blachernitissa in the Kunsthistorisches Museum is mostly hidden beneath its metal frame but it is visible when the gem is viewed from the side.

Byzantine. This group includes a sardonyx of Christ blessing St. George and St. Demetrios (no. 142), two sardonyxes of St. John the Baptist (nos. 137 and 138), a sardonyx of the Virgin Blachernitissa (no. 54), a sardonyx of Christ Standing (no. 139) and a sardonyx of the Crucifixion (no. 140).[58]

Most of the gems share a similar carving and figure style in which the figures are proportional and plastic modeling is employed for the naturalistic representation of facial features, limbs, and musculature. Forms tend to be contoured and rounded and the carving is detailed enough to include the representation of garment folds and anatomical features such as ribs and chest muscles. Such detailed carving can be observed, for example, on the bare legs of the warrior saints on the sardonyx in the Cabinet des Médailles, the emaciated body of St. John the Baptist on the Vatican and British Museum gems, and the smooth, youthful face of the Virgin on the sardonyx in the Kunsthistorisches Museum (nos. 142, 137, 54). The carving style of the two sardonyxes in Prague is an exception. On both pieces the carving style is more linear and the forms are flatter.

Although the image of the Crucifixion is found on artworks of the Christian East and West, the other iconographic themes that appear on these sardonyxes are Byzantine. The image of Christ Standing is found on Byzantine art in a variety of media, from coinage to manuscript illumination, from the tenth century onward. The type of standing Christ that appears on the sardonyx in Prague is the Antiphonites, which means "The Guaranteer." It is drawn from an

[58] On the sardonyx of Christ blessing military saints in the Cabinet des Medailles (no. 42) see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 193-194, no. 193. On the sardonyxes of the Crucifixion and of Christ Standing in Prague (nos. 139, 140) see Bauer, "The Reliquary coronation Cross from St. Vitus Treasury," 1-6. On the sardonyx of the Virgin Blachernitissa in the Kunsthistorisches Museum (no. 54) see Eichler and Kris, *Die Kameen im Kunsthistorischen Museum*, 94, no. 126. On the sardonyx of John the Baptist in the Vatican (no. 136) see Wentzel "Mittelalterliche Gemmen in den Sammlungen Italiens" 271, no. 819. On the sardonyx of John the Baptist in the British Museum (no. 138) see Dalton, *Catalogue of the Engraved Gems of the Post-Classical Periods in the Department of British and Mediaeval Antiquities,* 2, no. 7.

icon that was housed in the Church of the Chalkoprateia in Constantinople. Two eleventh-century rulers, the Empress Zoe and Emperor Nikephoros III Botaniates, were especially devoted to this icon.[59] The image of Christ blessing warrior saints was a popular theme on Byzantine lead seals and steatite carvings from the eleventh and twelfth centuries.[60] The image of the Virgin Blachernitissa was represented on Byzantine coins, seals, cross-shaped phylacteries, and carved gemstones in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.[61] Finally, the image of St. John the Baptist with a bare chest is represented frequently on Byzantine gems that date to the late eleventh through the thirteenth centuries.

The iconographic theme of John the Baptist that appears on the British Museum sardonyx is relatively rare, but it comes from a Byzantine context (no. 138). The Baptist is represented standing next to a tree. He holds a scroll in his left hand and holds his right hand in a blessing gesture. He turns towards the Hand of God, which emerges from the upper corner. The tree recalls the passage from Matthew 3:10 in which the Baptist warns, "Even now the axe is lying at the root of the tree; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."[62] The short inscription on the scroll, METANO(εῖτε), refers to the same passage in

[59] The Empress Zoe placed the image of Christ Antiphonites on her coins in 1041, and Emperor Nikephoros III Botaniates placed the image on his coins between 1078 and 1081. The latter is also thought to have commissioned a mosaic of Christ Antiphonites in Nicaea as part of his restoration of the Church of the Dormition. See Bellinger and Grierson, *Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection,* vol. 3, pt. 1*,* 162-164.

[60] For a Byzantine seal with this iconographic theme see the seal of John Metropolitan of Serres, DO 47.2.153, in Nesbitt and Oikonomides, *Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks,* vol. 1, 110, no. 42.4. For two steatites with image see Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 117, no. 27 and 178, no. 100.

[61] Teteriatnikov, "The Image of the Virgin Zoodochos Pege," 225-238; Brigitte Pitarakis, "*À Propos* de la Vierge orante au Christ Enfant (xie-x11e siecles): L'émergence d'un culte," *Cahiers archéologique* 48 (2000): 45-46.

[62] Michael D. Coogan, "The Gospel According to Matthew." In The New Oxford Annotated Bible. Oxford Biblical Studies Online, accessed April 19, 2015,

Matthew 3:2, in which sinners are urged, "Repent: for the kingdom of heaven has come near."[63] Although the image of St. John the Baptist with the axe and the tree does not appear elsewhere on Byzantine glyptics, it can be found on works of Byzantine art from the eleventh century through the late Byzantine period including the Khakhuli Triptych, a twelfth-century seal of the Monastery of the Prodromos, and a fourteenth-century *enkolpion* in the Vatopedi Monastery.[64]

The final element that links these six sardonyxes to each other and to Byzantium is their Greek inscriptions. The letter forms and abbreviations are typical of those found on Byzantine carved objects from the tenth through thirteenth centuries. For example, on the sardonyxes carved with the image of St. John the Baptist and the sardonyx in the Cabinet des Médailles with Christ blessing two military saints, the abbreviation of the word *agios* is formed in the same manner. The alpha is set inside the omicron and its cross bar slants upward from left to right. Other carved artworks upon which this epigraphic form is found are the ivory with the image of St. Demetrios in the Metropolitan Museum, which dates to the tenth century, and the nephrite carving with the image of St. Peter and St. Paul in Karlsruhe, which dates to the eleventh century (no. 30).[65] The *nomina sacra* on the sardonyx with Christ Standing in Prague is also identical in form to the one on the sardonyx with Christ blessing St. George and St. Demetrios in the Cabinet

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http://www.oxfordbiblicalstudies.com/article/book/obso-9780195288803/obso-9780195288803-div1-1181.

[63] Biblical text from ibid. A brief discussion of the gem and its inscriptions can be found in Dalton, *Catalogue of the Engraved Gems of the Post-Classical Periods,* 2, no. 7.

[64] On the iconography of John the Baptist on the Khakhuli Triptych, see Ioli Kalavrezou, "Female Popular Beliefs and Maria of Alania," *Journal of Turkish Studies* 36 (2011): 88-93. On the seal see Nesbitt and Oikonomides, *Catalogue of Byzantine seals at Dumbarton Oaks,* vol. 5, 42, no. 19.5. On the steatite in the Vatopedi Monastery see Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 124-125, no. 43.

[65] On the ivory carving see Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium,* 134-135 no. 81. On the chrysoprase see Jenny Albani, "The Cameo with the Apostles Peter and Paul in Karlsruhe" in *Lampedon: Aphieroma ste mneme tes Doula Mourike,* ed. M. Aspra-Bardabake (Athens: EMP, 2003), 23-30.

des Médailles. On both gems, the inscribed letters are large and wide and the superscript marks are curved with a decorative flourish. The superscript marks on the *nomina sacra* of the Virgin Blachernitissa in the Kunsthistorisches Museum are also carved in a decorative manner. Finally, an epigraphic comparison can be made between the inscriptions on the two sardonyxes with the image of St. John the Baptist. Both gems are inscribed with a ligature that combines the letters *pi, rho delta*, and *mu* of the word *Prodromos*.[66]

The six sardonyxes of this group can be attributed to Byzantium with certainty. Despite their similarities with one another, it is not certain that they are contemporary. For example, the sardonyx of the Virgin Blachernitissa in the Kunsthistorisches Museum is carved with curved lines and soft rounded forms that recall the style of late eleventh-century carvings of the opaque group, whereas the sardonyx with the image the Crucifixion in Prague displays flatter forms and a more linear carving style. Therefore, the sardonyx of the Virgin Blachernitissa is considered earlier in date and has been placed in the late eleventh century, while the others in the group have been dated to the twelfth century or, more broadly, to the twelfth or thirteenth centuries. All six can be attributed to Constantinople because of the high quality of the stones and the skillfulness of the carving.

[66] The monogram present a challenge for dating the gems. Citing Nikolay Likachev's work on seals, Alisa Bank wrote that this epigraphic form only appears as early as the thirteenth century. See Bank, "Vier byzantinisierende Kameen aus der Ermitage," 13n8. The base of the monogram is a *delta* with legs that extend below the cross-bar, however, and this type of *delta* can be found on carved objects as early as the twelfth century. Therefore, it is possible that the monogram is earlier in date.

Group 4: Sardonyx Carvings in Low Relief

The last sardonyx carvings to be analyzed are those that are carved in low, flat relief. The figures tend to be stocky, with flat forms that are delineated by linear incisions. Most of the stones are smaller than the average *enkolpion* and measure less than 3 cm in height. These sardonyxes include four with the image of Daniel between the lions (nos. 95, 96, 97, C7), three with the image of the Archangel Michael (C6, C8, C12), one with the image of Christ (C10), one with the image of the Transfiguration (C11), and one with the image of three martyr saints (C5).[67]

These gems are difficult to date and attribute. On the one hand, they display Byzantine iconography and Greek inscriptions. On the other hand, they do not compare well with Byzantine gems in carving or figure style. Some have already been convincingly attributed to the medieval West on the basis of their similarities with Western glyptics.[68] Hans Wentzel, Alisa Bank, and other scholars have identified Italian and French carvings of sardonyx and agate from

[67] The sardonyx carvings of Daniel between the lions are located in the Hermitage, Cividale, the British Museum, and the Staatliches Münzsammlung in Munich. On the sardonyx in the British Museum see Williamson, "Daniel between the lions," 37-39. On the sardonyx in Cividale see Menis, "Un malnoto cammeo cividalese con Daniele," 184-186. On the sardonyx of Daniel in the Hermitage (inv. no. ш-360) see Bank, "Vier byzantinisierende Kameen aus der Ermitage," 15-16. On the sardonyx of Daniel in Munich see Wentzel, "Die Mittelalterlichen Gemmen der Staatlichen Münzsammlung zu München," 52, no. 15. One sardonyx of the Archangel Michael is located in the Staatliches Münzsammlung in Munich. On this gem see ibid., 53, no. 18. One sardonyx of the Archangel Michael is located in the Louvre. On this gem see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 288, no. 204. The sardonyx of the three saints and one of the sardonyxes of the Archangel Michael are located in the Hermitage. See Bank, *Prikladnoe Iskusstvo Vizantii,* 134 and Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii*, vol. 3, no. 917. The sardonyx of Christ is located in Stockholm. See Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen," 64, no. 123. The sardonyx with the image of the Transfiguration is located in the Hermitage. See Piatnitsky, "Panagia with 'The Transfiguration' Cameo from the Hermitage Collection," 237. See also Alisa Bank's discussion of the agate carving of the Virgin Orant in the Hermitage (C9) in "Vier byzantinisierende Kameen aus der Ermitage," 15-16.

[68] Outside of the publications of Wentzel, the best discussion of Western gems, most of which were produced in Italy and France, is in Rainer Kahsnitz, "Staufische Kameen," 477-520.

late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries that offer close parallels, such as the agate carving of St. Anne in Modena, the sardonyx of King Jehu in the Hermitage, and the sardonyx of St. George in Windsor Castle (C2, C3, C4).[69] Although the figure of St. Anne on the agate in Modena has been modeled in relief with smooth, rounded forms, the other two gems are carved in low relief with flat forms that have been articulated with linear and circular incisions. The distinctive figure style differs from the figure style of Byzantine carvings. Anatomical features such as noses, cheeks, and eyes are exaggerated and heads tend to have a bulbous appearance. This can be observed most clearly on the agate carving of St. Anne, in which the hood of the saint's *maphorion* is disproportionately large and spherical (C2).

The attribution of the following sardonyx carvings to the medieval West can be confirmed because they display aspects of the carving and figure style that were described above. They are the sardonyx with the image of Christ in Stockholm, two with the Archangel Michael in the Louvre and the Hermitage, one with Daniel between the lions in the Staatliches Münzsammlung of Munich, and one with the image of three martyr saints in the Hermitage (C5, C6, C7, C10, C12).[70] These gems are carved in low relief with flat, simple forms. The heads are represented in a round, bulbous manner. Although they display Byzantine iconography, they

[69] These pieces have been identified as western works in the Byzantine style by Hans Wentzel, Alice Bank, Rainer Kahsnitz, and Jannic Durand. These scholars have argued that other gems can be attributed through comparisons with these pieces. See Kahsnitz, "Staufische Kameen," 498-499; Wentzel "Die Kamee mit dem hl. Georg im Schloss zu Windsor," 103-110; Wentzel "Mittelalterliche Gemmen in den Sammlungen Italiens" throughout, esp. pp. 243 and 265; Wentzel, ""Die Mittelalterlichen Gemmen der Staatlichen Münzsammlung zu München," 43-52; Bank, "Vier byzantinisierende Kameen aus der Ermitage," 16; Guillou and Durand, *Byzance*, 288.

[70] These attributions are in agreement with scholars who have already dated and attributed these gems. On the Archangel Michael sardonyx in the Louvre see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 288. On the sardonyx of Daniel, Wentzel proposed that it was an Italian imitation of a Byzantine work or a provincial Byzantine work in Wentzel, "Die Mittelalterlichen Gemmen der Staatlichen Münzsammlung zu München," 52, no. 15. On the sardonyx of Christ in Stockholm see Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen, Versuch einer Grundlegung," 64 no. 123. On the sardonyx of three martyr saints in the Hermitage see Bank, *Prikladnoe Iskusstvo Vizantii,* 134.

cannot otherwise be compared with Byzantine carvings in gemstone or steatite. Instead, their carving and figure style is closest to that of the French and Italian gems from the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (C2, C3, C4). Therefore, an attribution to the medieval West remains the most probable for these works.

There are, however, three sardonyxes with the image of Daniel between the lions that should be considered Byzantine (nos. 95, 96, 97). As noted earlier in this chapter, scholars have not agreed upon an attribution for these three gems. Alisa Bank determined that those in the Hermitage and Cividale could not be from the medieval West, but she also had difficulty attributing them firmly to Byzantium.[71] Paul Williamson proposed that they were works of medieval Italy in a byzantinizing style.[72] My attribution of the three works to Byzantium takes into account iconography, epigraphy, and the prominence of the cult of Daniel in Constantinople.

If one accepts that the three gems with the image of Daniel between the lions were produced somewhere that had a strong following of the cult of Daniel, then Constantinople should be identified as their location of origin. Daniel's relics were located in Constantinople and his tomb was on the pilgrimage route.[73] His *vita* was revised in the tenth century by the hagiographer Symeon Metaphrastes, who highlighted Daniel's dual role as a holy man and a court eunuch.[74] His liturgy was celebrated at the Church of Hagia Sophia.[75] In Byzantium,

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[71] "Bank, "Vier byzantinisierende Kameen aus der Ermitage," 13-16 and Bank, "Sur le probleme de la glyptique italo-byzantine," 311-318.

[72] Williamson, "Daniel between the lions," 37-39.

[73] George Majeska, "A Medallion of the Prophet Daniel in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection" *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 28 (1974): 361-366 and Majeska, *Russian Travelers to Constantinople in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, 327-328.

[74] Kathryn M. Ringrose, "Reconfiguring the Prophet Daniel: Gender, Sanctity, and Castration in Byzantium," in *Gender and Difference in the Middle Ages*, eds. Sharon A. Farmer and Carol Brown Pasternack (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 89-96.

Daniel was also known as the supposed author of dream books and apocalyptic prophecies.[76] I know of no evidence that suggests that Daniel held the same cultural and religious importance in the medieval West. In fact, Daniel is not represented on a single Venetian cameo of glass paste. If the subject matter of glass paste cameos is any indication of the relative importance of holy figures in a Western devotional context, this would suggest that Daniel was rather insignificant.[77] Since Daniel was not represented on Venetian cameos of glass, it seems unlikely that several gemstones would be carved with his image in the medieval West. It is more likely that the three sardonyxes of Daniel were carved in Constantinople.

The gems with the image of Daniel between the lions in the British Museum, Cividale, and the Hermitage are difficult to compare with Byzantine gems, mainly because Byzantine gems tend to be carved in higher relief. A comparison can be made, however, with the sardonyx of St. John the Baptist in the British Museum. The lions on the gems with the image of Daniel are carved with the same technique as the tree and the axe on the British Museum gem. The white stone is flattened into block-like forms that are divided with circular drill marks and short, linear incisions. The figure of Daniel on the Hermitage gem can also be compared with the

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[75] Daniel is commemorated along with the Three Youths who were thrown into the fiery furnace. See Lowden, *Illuminated Prophet Books,* 78; Majeska, "A Medallion of the Prophet Daniel," 363n13; Miloš M. Velimirović, "Liturgical Drama in Byzantium and Russia" *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 16 (1962): 352-359.

[76] Steven M. Oberhelman, *Dreambooks in Byzantium: Six Oneirocritica in Translation, with Commentary and Introduction* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 59-116; Albert-Marie Denis, *Introduction aux pseudépigraphes grecs d'Ancien Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 309-314.

[77] Venetian cameos of glass paste were produced mainly for consumption in the medieval West and therefore depict saints who were more commonly venerated in the West instead of in Byzantium. There are no Venetian glass cameos with image of Daniel. See Hans Wentzel, "Das Medaillon mit dem Hl. Theodor und die venezianischen Glaspasten im byzantinischen Stil" in *Festschrift für Erich Meyer zum sechzigsten Geburtstag, 29. Oktober 1957,* ed. Werner Gramberg (Hamburg: E. Hauswedell, 1959), 56.

figure of Daniel on the bloodstone in the Cabinet des Médailles (nos. 95, 159).[78] Both are front-facing and have oval-shaped faces, blank eyes, triangular-shaped noses, and full lips. Their Phrygian caps are symmetrical and come to a peak above their heads. On the other two sardonyxes, Daniel's head is tilted, as it also is on the sardonyx carvings in high relief in the Galleria Sabauda and the Hermitage (nos. 92, 93, 96, 97). The sardonyxes of Daniel in low relief can also be compared with Byzantine seals with the image of Daniel from the eleventh and twelfth centuries (C13).[79] On the seals, Daniel is also represented in stocky proportions, his legs are set apart, and the lower edges of his cape are smooth, without visible folds

The form of the inscriptions on the three sardonyxes of Daniel between the lions provides further evidence that they are Byzantine. The inscriptions are in Greek and the word "prophet" is in the monogrammatic form that appears with other Byzantine representations of Daniel from the eleventh century to the late Byzantine period. It seems unlikely that the Greek monogram could be so perfectly duplicated by craftsmen in the West. In fact, the sardonyx of Daniel in the Staatliches Münzsammlung that has been attributed to the medieval West does not have the monogram. Instead, the word "prophet" is written out in Greek and is slightly misspelled.[80] For all of the reasons discussed, the three sardonyxes of Daniel in the Hermitage, Cividale, and the British Museum can be attributed to Byzantium and dated to the eleventh or twelfth centuries.

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[78] On the bloodstone of Daniel see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 348, no. 330.

[79] On an eleventh or twelfth century seal with Daniel between the lions in the Hermitage see Bank, *Byzantine Art in the Collection of Soviet Museums* no. 171 (unnumbered plates). For an eleventh or twelfth-century seal in the Cabinet des Médailles, see Mango and Mango, "Cameos in Byzantium," 71, no. 4.21b.

[80] On the gem in Munich the word "Prophet" is written with an *alpha* substituted for the eta, as follows: O ΠΡΦΑC. For the spelling of the inscription see Wentel, "Die Mittelalterlichen Gemmen der Staatlichen Münzsammlung zu München," 52, no. 15.

The sardonyx of Daniel in the Staatliches Münzsammlung is probably a Western copy of a Byzantine gem.

The sardonyx of the Archangel Michael in the Staatliches Münzsammlung and the small sardonyx with the image of the Transfiguration in the Hermitage were carved later than those that have been examined thus far (C8, C11).[81] Both display Byzantine iconographic themes, but the presence of iconographic peculiarities suggests that the original themes were not known or understood by the carvers. For example, the figure of the Archangel Michael on the gem in Munich resembles the typical image of the Archangel that appears on Byzantine carved gems. The figure is clad in armor, holds a sword in the right hand, and is slightly turned. The sheath of the sword has been absorbed into the image so that it almost disappears and the cloak is represented as both falling loosely behind the figure and slung over the left arm. This representation of the cloak in this impossible arrangement suggests that the artist may have based his composition upon more than one model. The figure also has a bulbous head that is reminiscent of the figure style of gems that were given a Western attribution, such as the sardonyx with the image of the Archangel Michael in the Louvre (C12).[82] The sardonyx of the Archangel Michael in Munich could be a copy of one such Western gem. This would allow for two degrees of separation from Byzantine models, which could explain its iconographic inconsistencies.

[81] On the sardonyx of the Archangel Michael in Munich see ibid., 53, no. 18. On the sardonyx with the transfiguration in the Hermitage see Piatnitsky, "Panagia with 'The Transfiguration' Cameo from the Hermitage Collection," 237.

[82] Wentzel concluded that the work is either Western in the Byzantine style or possibly Byzantine, and noted the comparison with the gem in the Louvre. See Wentzel, "Die Mittelalterlichen Gemmen der Staatlichen Münzsammlung zu München," 53, no. 18.

The sardonyx with the image of the Transfiguration in the Hermitage could not have been carved later than the first quarter of the seventeenth century.[83] It is unlikely to be of Byzantine origin because the image deviates significantly from the original iconographic theme of the Transfiguration. The figure of Christ is represented with normal proportions, but the other figures are compressed and abstracted to the point that they are almost unrecognizable. The cowering figures of the disciples in the lower half of the composition have been reduced to shapes. The work may have been carved after a Byzantine prototype, but its date and location of production cannot be determined.

Conclusion

The most important finding from the analysis of Byzantine sardonyx carvings is that it is not possible to date or attribute a sardonyx carving based only upon the color in which the relief is carved. Byzantine sardonyxes are carved in both the light and dark figure styles, as are gems that were carved in the medieval West. Another finding is that variations exist in the carving and figures style of Byzantine sardonyxes. This is not surprising, as a variety of techniques were also used for carving other types of gemstones, especially opaque stones such as bloodstone. Finally, this analysis has confirmed what other scholars have noted, which is that Byzantine gems were copied in the medieval West. These "Italo-Byzantine" gems are difficult to attribute and date because they display Byzantine iconographic themes and, occasionally, Greek inscriptions. This study has focused only on determining which of these gems could be Byzantine, but a study of

[83] A *termibus ante quem* is provided by the gem's placement within the *panagia* of Patriarch Philareten. See Piatnitsky, "Panagia with 'The Transfiguration' Cameo from the Hermitage Collection," 237.

Western gems in the byzantinizing style would benefit from a focused study as they remain poorly understood.

Chapter Seven: Subject Matter and Iconography Part I

This chapter and the one that follows it are dedicated to the subject matter and iconography of Byzantine carved gemstones. The objectives for these two chapters are to identify the subjects that appear on Byzantine gems, the frequency with which they appear, their iconography, and changes in iconography and subject matter that occur over time. The method of analysis was to examine all of the gems together as a group by means of a database into which relevant information for every gem was entered and then sorted. This information included their present location, date, material, size, general subject matter, and specific subject matter. The distinction between the latter two categories is as follows; the general subject matter is the type of holy figure represented (such as a warrior saint) and the specific subject matter is the identity of the holy figure (such as St. George). For this methodological approach I was inspired by the work of Dr. John Cotsonis, who used a database to analyze the iconography of a large group of Byzantine lead seals.[1]

The database method provided a good starting point and a logical way to organize a large quantity of information. After organizing the information and arriving at useful data points, I turned to art-historical methods in order to interpret the findings and develop conclusions regarding their significance. The most important of these methods is iconographic analysis, which was employed in order to understand why certain themes were chosen instead of others. Some iconographic themes are associated with particular groups of individuals, and whenever possible I used this information to put forth hypotheses regarding ownership.

The study of the subject matter and iconography of Byzantine carved gemstones was aided by a number of major catalogues and scholarly publications. The studies of Byzantine coins and

[1] Cotsonis, "The Contribution of Byzantine Lead Seals to the Study of the Cult of the Saints," 383-497.

seals published by Dumbarton Oaks, George Zacos, and Dr. John Cotsonis were instrumental for demonstrating the ways in which the major iconographic themes in Byzantine art changed over time and the groups of individuals with which they can be associated.[2] Publications dedicated to the iconography of important holy figures, such as the Virgin and warrior saints, guided my research and aided my efforts to date each gem.[3] I consulted studies of related works of devotional art such as steatites, micromosiac icons, and cross-shaped *enkolpia* in order to contextualize my findings and locate comparative images.[4]

The findings from my analysis of the subject matter and iconography of Byzantine carved gemstones have been summarized below. First, it should be noted that the subject matter of Byzantine gems is entirely religious. This is somewhat surprising given that secular subject matter is expressed on Byzantine art in other media including ivory, enamel, and textiles.[5] Nonetheless, no Byzantine gems displaying secular themes have been identified with certainty. Hans Wentzel identified a single gem with secular subject matter that he thought could be Byzantine. His reasoning was based mainly upon his determination that the gem was not antique, and therefore

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[2] Nesbitt and Oikonomides, *Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks,* vols. 1-6; Bellinger and Grierson, *Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection*, vols. 3 and 4; G. Zacos, Zacos and Veglery, *Byzantine Lead Seals,* 2 vols.; Cotsonis, "The Contribution of Byzantine Lead Seals to the Study of the Cult of the Saints," 383-497.

[3] Leslie Brubaker and Mary Cunningham, *The Cult of the Mother of God in Byzantium: Texts and Images* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011); Maria Vasilakē, *Images of the Mother of God: Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium* (Aldershot: Ashgate Pub., 2005); Pentcheva, *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium*; Christopher Walter, *The Warrior Saints in Byzantine Art and Tradition* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003); Grotowski, *Arms and Armour of the Warrior Saints*.

[4] Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite*; Pitarakis, *Les croix-reliquaires pectorales byzantines en bronze*; Ryder, *Micromosaic Icons of the Late Byzantine Period*.

[5] On Byzantine secular art, see André Grabar, "L'art profane à Byzance" in *Actes du XIVe Congrés International des Études Byzantines,* vol. 3 (Bucarest: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste Romania, 1974), 317-41; Anthony Cutler, "On Byzantine Boxes," *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 42/43 (1985/1985): 32-47; Henry Maguire, "The Profane Aesthetic in Byzantine Art and Literature," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 54 (2000): 189-205.

could be from the medieval period. The gem in question is a brown chalcedony stone carved with an image of a lion. It is set into the base of the Mathilde Cross in Essen, which dates to around the year 1000.[6] A comparison of this gem with Byzantine gems from the same time period suggests that it is unlikely to be of a Byzantine origin. The horizontal format and the use of brown chalcedony are unusual in Byzantine glyptics, and the carving style does not correspond well with the carving style of Byzantine gems of the same date. The rendition of the lion in aerial perspective with realistic proportions also differs from the depiction of lions on Byzantine gems with the image of Daniel and between the lions. On these Byzantine gems, the lions are usually represented in a highly abstracted manner and are frequently represented in profile. In the absence of material evidence that proves otherwise, it can be concluded that Byzantine carved gemstones primarily displayed religious subject matter.

There is, however, evidence from textual sources that antique gems carved with secular subjects were reused during the Byzantine period. Two imperial cameos from ancient Rome, the Great Cameo of France and the Cameo of Augustus, were in use during Byzantine times. The Great Cameo of France was mounted like an icon in a metal frame adorned with images of holy figures. Manuel Philes also described gems carved with secular subject matter in two poems. While it is probable that he was describing antique gems that were still in use, it is possible that the gems in question had been newly carved in the Byzantine period.[7]

One expected finding from the examination of the Byzantine gems together is that iconographic parallels can sometimes be identified with seals and devotional art in other media. For example, the Virgin appears on carved gems as early as the tenth century, but appears with a

[6] Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 19-20.

[7] On the reuse of ancient cameos in Byzantium see Mango and mango, "Cameos in Byzantium," 59-63.

greater frequency in the eleventh century and with the greatest frequency in the twelfth centuries. This finding can be compared to a similar pattern that was noticed by Cotsonis in his study of the iconography of lead seals. Cotsonis found that the percentage of lead seals with the image of the Virgin begins to rise in the eleventh century and is highest in the twelfth century. He explained this finding with the expansion of the cult of the Virgin in the eleventh and twelfth centuries and the development of private devotional practices that encouraged the veneration of holy images.[8]

The subject matter and iconography of Byzantine gems were guided their function and by constraints of size, hardness of material, and the natural shape of the stone. Standing figures are predominantly found on gems that are larger than average, whereas smaller gems are usually carved with bust figures. Gems are usually carved on the vertical axis. They are sometimes carved on the horizontal axis for narrative scenes and for figures that are typically represented in profile, such as St. John the Theologian. Portraits are represented more frequently than narrative scenes and individual figures are represented far more often than multi-figured compositions. This last observation is explained by the function of carved gemstones as personal "icons," or *enkolpia*. They were intended to allow a supplicant to carry their patron saint at all times for protection and as a gesture of devotion. A single figure was therefore more fitting to the function of the object than a narrative scene. Narrative scenes and multi-figured compositions were also more difficult to carve because of the hard material of the gemstone.

Most Byzantine gems are single-sided. Only seventeen, or nine percent, have an image on the reverse. Almost all of these double-sided gems are opaque stones such as bloodstone, nephrite, and lapis lazuli. Only one is a sardonyx. Sardonyx was not typically carved on both sides because the layers of stone were reserved for the relief image on the obverse. None of the

[8] Cotsonis, "The Contribution of Byzantine Lead Seals to the Study of the Cult of the Saints," 406-413.

semi-translucent stones such as sapphire, blue chalcedony, and amethyst, are double-sided. The preciousness of the material and its translucence must have discouraged carving on the reverse.

The subjects that appear on the reverse of double-sided gems are the cross, the Virgin, military saints, St. Pantaleimon, and St. John the Baptist. The cross appears on the reverse of seven gems and takes the form of either the *globus cruciger* or the patriarchal cross. The Virgin appears on the reverse of four gems. When the Virgin appears on the reverse of a double-sided gem, Christ or the Crucifixion is on the obverse. According to the Byzantine rules of hierarchy, the less important of two holy figures is the one to appear on the reverse of a double-sided icon. Since Christ is the most important figure, he never appears on the reverse of carved gemstones. Since Christ is the only figure who was more important than the Virgin, she only appears on the reverse when Christ is on the obverse. St. John the Baptist, who was the most important saint after the Virgin, only appears on the reverse of carved gemstones when the Virgin is represented on the obverse. St. John the Baptist also appears on the obverse of carved gemstones when military saints are represented on the reverse. Military saints are occasionally represented on both the obverse and the reverse of double-sided gems.

For Byzantine carved gemstones, most of which were worn as *enkolpia*, choices of subject matter and iconography were guided by the need for intercession and protection as well as by factors such as social rank, occupation, and a personal identification with a particular holy figure. The Virgin, St. Nicholas, and St. John the Baptist were represented frequently on gemstone *enkolpia* because they were considered powerful intercessors. The Archangel Michael and warrior saints were also represented frequently because they were considered holy protectors, who could defend their supplicants in the spiritual and physical realms. It should be noted that although the Archangel Michael is frequently represented as a courtier on seals, steatites, and painted icons, on

carved gemstones he is nearly always represented as a warrior. This iconographic type of Archangel Michael "the Defender" prevails on carved gemstones in order to enhance the protective nature of *enkolpia* with the Archangel's image.

Certain bishop and apostle saints, such as St. Basil and St. Paul, were represented infrequently on carved gemstones because they did not have a broad appeal and were not considered to be especially strong intercessors or protectors. When they were represented on carved gems, they must have been chosen as subjects for personal reasons. The gems with their images may have belonged to church officials, who could have chose those holy figures because of their role in shaping Christian doctrine.

The most unexpected finding from this analysis is that the prophet Daniel appears more frequently than any holy figure, other than Christ and the Virgin. As an Old Testament prophet, Daniel has not traditionally been considered a holy figure who was commonly chosen as a patron saint. Therefore, when his image appears on *enkolpia* in other media, it is interpreted as having a soteriological meaning.[9] My analysis will demonstrate that Daniel's popularity as a subject on gemstone *enkolpia* should also be attributed to his role as a patron saint who was especially distinguished for his divinely inspired intelligence and wisdom.

In the remainder of this chapter and in the one that follows it, the subject matter and iconography of the gems are examined. The discussion will proceed based upon the Byzantine hierarchy of saints. Therefore, the gems carved with Christ, the Virgin, St. John the Baptist, the

[9] On the meaning of the theme of Daniel between the lions in early Christian funerary art and rituals see Kathleen Corrigan, "The Three Hebrews in the Fiery Furnace: an Early Byzantine Icon at Mt. Sinai," in *Anathemata eortika: Studies in honor of Thomas F. Mathews*, eds. Joseph D. Alchermes, Helen C. Evans, and Thelma K. Thomas (Mainz: P. von Zabern, 2009), 93-95. On the soterioloigcal interpretation of the image of Daniel between the lions on *enkolpia* see Ioli Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Women and Their World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Art Museums, 2003), 300-301; Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 86, no. 27.

Archangel Michael, and warrior saints are discussed in this chapter. The next chapter is reserved for a discussion of gems carved with the prophet Daniel, bishop saints, apostles, female saints, and narrative scenes.

Christ

Christ is the figure represented the most often on Byzantine gems. His image appears on sixty-one gems in this study, which accounts for thirty-one percent of the total. The majority of gems with the image of Christ date to the tenth through the thirteenth centuries. Only four date to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Christ is represented on over forty percent of gems that date to the tenth and eleventh centuries. The percentage of gems with the image of Christ falls in the twelfth century to twenty-four percent.

Christ is represented on a greater percentage of gems that date to the tenth and eleventh centuries because during those centuries carved gemstones were produced in smaller numbers for a more limited clientele. A greater percentage of these gems were produced for emperors, who favored the image of Christ on their seals, coins, and devotional art. In the twelfth century, gems were carved in greater numbers and were accessible to more people. This is evident not only from the greater numbers of gems that survive from the twelfth century, but also from the variation in their quality. While still luxury objects, they were made accessible to more people, with the result that a greater variety of holy figures were represented on them.

Similar observations have been made regarding the iconography of coins, lead seals and historiated cross-shaped *enkolpia*. In coinage from the mid-ninth century through the late eleventh centuries, Christ was represented almost exclusively, with some exceptions in which the Virgin

appeared instead. From the late eleventh century onward, Christ was still represented frequently on coinage, but no longer to the exclusion of other holy figures. The Virgin and occasionally the Archangel Michael, John the Baptist, or military saints were represented on coins as well.[10] On lead seals a wider range of holy figures appears in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, which has been attributed to the expansion of bureaucracy coupled with the growth of the cults of the saints and the Virgin.[11] On cross-shaped *enkolpia,* the most common subject matter was the crucified Christ or Christological cycles. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, however, a simpler type of cross-shaped *enkolpion* appeared that was engraved with images of orant saints and the Virgin. Due to its lower quality, generic appearance, and simple intercessory images, it has been suggested that this type of cross-shaped *enkolpion* was not produced for an aristocratic clientele.[12]

These observations from carved gems, coins, lead seals, and cross-shaped *enkolpia* demonstrate that the apparent decline in the relatively popularity of Christ as a subject after the eleventh century can be attributed to the fact that he was overshadowed by the increase in other holy figures that could be represented and by the rising prominence of the Virgin as an intercessory figure. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries the cult of the Virgin expanded and devotional practices became oriented towards the goal of gaining individual salvation. The Virgin and saints were considered more accessible than Christ, and their images increasingly appeared on devotional objects that were produced in a variety of media.[13]

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[10] On Christ's dominance in tenth and eleventh century coinage see Grierson and Bellinger, *Catalogue of Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection,* vol. 3, no. 1, 146.

[11] Cotsonis, "The Contribution of Byzantine Lead Seals to the Study of the Cult of the Saints," 410-413.

[12] Pitarakis, *Les croix-reliquaires,* 84-90.

[13] Cotsonis, "The Contribution of Byzantine Lead Seals to the Study of the Cult of the Saints," 409-413; Kazhdan and Wharton, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*, 95-97 (cited in

Byzantine gems carved with the image of Christ can be categorized into the following iconographic themes: Christ Standing, Christ Pantokrator, Christ Enthroned, and Christ Emmanuel. The Pantokrator image is represented the most often. It appears on thirty-nine gems, accounting for sixty-four percent of the gems with the image of Christ. After Christ Pantokrator, Christ Standing appears with the next greatest frequency. It appears on fifteen gems, which accounts for twenty-five percent of the gems with the image of Christ. Christ Emmanuel and Christ Enthroned are represented infrequently on carved gems. Although each iconographic theme had a specific meaning, all share the same essential focus upon Christ's salvation and mercy. This can be assumed from the Christian belief that salvation could only be obtained through Christ and from inscriptions, in which Christ is propitiated directly for help or his promises of mercy and salvation from the bible are referenced.

I would like to suggest that many gems carved with the image of Christ belonged to emperors. This hypothesis is based on the fact that emperors were the most likely to select Christ as the holy figure with which they identified. This is mainly a matter of privilege; emperors believed that they were divinely appointed and that they ruled as Christ's representatives on earth. They regularly aligned themselves with Christ in public and private imagery that included coins, monumental painting, manuscript illumination, and seals.[14] For example, Christ and the emperor were typically placed on the opposite sides of the same coin, their one-to-one relationship easily communicated. On seals, which were an especially significant marker of public identity, imperial

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ibid., 411n88); Kalavrezou, "Images of the Mother: When the Virgin Mary became Meter Theou," 171-172.

[14] On the relationship between Christ and the Emperor and its expression in art see André Grabar, *L'empereur dans l'art byzantin: Recherches sur l'art officiel de l'empire d'Orient* (Paris: Les belles lettres, 1936), 98-122 and Henry Maguire, "Style and Ideology in Byzantine Imperial Art," *Gesta* 28.2 (1989): 227-229.

individuals had the privilege of displaying an image of Christ. High-ranking members of the Church and court usually selected the Virgin or other holy figures that ranked lower in the heavenly hierarchy.[15]

Another reason to believe that many gems carved with the image of Christ belonged to emperors is that these gems tend to be of a high quality. Many are large and several are formed like an icon with a rectangular base and an arched top. Five are carved of the extremely precious lapis lazuli stone. The bloodstone with the image of Christ that belonged to Emperor Leo VI is deep in color with rich greens and reds that blend together smoothly (no. 1).[16] This subtle blending of colors is rare among bloodstones, which are more typically spotted with red inclusions. The quality and preciousness of the stones used for the representation of Christ should be seen as a type of devotion towards him, in which the best materials were reserved for his image. It also suggests that many of the gems carved with Christ's image were owned by imperial and elite individuals, as these individuals had the most access to precious materials.

It would be incorrect to assert that every gem with the image of Christ was owned by an emperor. *Enkolpia* are different than lead seals in that they were not displayed in a public manner. While propriety might prevent a wealthy merchant from placing Christ on his personal seal, he could have owned a personal icon of Christ that he worshiped privately. The bloodstone with the image of Christ Pantokrator in the Ortiz collection could not have belonged to an emperor (no. 122). The inscription on the reverse requests the Lord's help for an individual named John, and it

[15] On the image of Christ on Byzantine coins see Grierson and Bellinger, *Catalogue of Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection* vol. 3, no. 1, 146-169. On seals of Byzantine emperors see Zacos, Veglery, and Nesbitt, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, vol. 1, no. 1, 47-127. On seals of Byzantine patriarchs, see Zacos and Veglery, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, vol. 2, 1-69.

[16] Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury,* 86-87, b.

does not include an imperial title such as *despotes* or *basileos*.[17] There are also gems with the image of Christ that are formed in a rough and abbreviated manner that would not have been suitable for an emperor because their quality is too low. Examples include the bloodstone in the Cabinet des Médailles and two closely related bloodstones in the Swedish History Museum and the Vatopedi Monastery (nos. 68, 69, 70).[18] These gems provide evidence that individuals from other societal ranks must have owned gems carved with the image of Christ.

The earliest image of Christ to appear on Byzantine carved gemstones is the standing image. The image of Christ Standing is associated with two famous imperial images known as Christ Chalkites and Christ Antiphonites. The iconography of Christ Chalkites originates from the icon that was restored to the Chalke gate at the imperial palace at the end of Iconoclasm. Although the original icon may have represented a bust portrait of Christ, in the middle Byzantine period the icon known as Christ Chalkites represented a standing figure. It was housed in the imperial chapel of Christ Chalkites, which was located near the Chalke gate and was associated with miraculous healing. The image of the standing Christ Chalkites was represented on coins and seals of imperial and high-ranking officials during the middle and late Byzantine periods including the coins and seal of John III Ducas Vatatzes of the thirteenth century and the seal of the *chartophylax* John Pantechnes, who lived during the eleventh or twelfth century.[19]

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[17] Inscription: KE BOHΘ CΩ ΔN IΩ. Published in Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium,* 175 no. 127.

[18] On the bloodstone in the Cabinet des Médailles, see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 439, no. 331. On the bloodstone in Stockholm, see Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen," 64, no. 22. On the bloodstone in the Vatopedi Monastery, see Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 80-81, no. 24.

[19] Cyril A. Mango, *The Brazen House: a Study of the Vestibule of the Imperial Palace of Constantinople* (Copenhagen: I kommission hos Munksgaard, 1959), 131-140.

The icon of Christ Antiphonites was located at the Church of the Chalkoprateia. It represented a standing image of Christ with his arm held in front of his body in blessing. The epithet "Antiphonites" means "the Guaranteer." The story of this icon is drawn from a legend in which the icon guaranteed a loan. A Christian merchant gave the icon of Christ Antiphonites to a Jewish bondsman in return for a loan, which, through a series of miracles, resulted in a successful profit. The Empress Zoe was known to have been especially devoted to this icon. According to Michael Psellos, she had a personal icon of Christ Antiphonites that she worshiped and consulted for prophetic knowledge. She also placed an image of Christ Antiphonites on her coins around the year 1042.[20]

The image of Christ Standing appears on thirteen gems. Three are bloodstones, three are lapis lazuli, three are chalcedony, one is agate, one is sardonyx, one is nephrite, and one is an amethyst. Many of these gems are larger than average and some are formed with a rectangular base and an arched top. The largest is the lapis lazuli plaque in the Kremlin, which measures 11.8 cm in height (no. 22).[21] Other large gems with the image of Christ Standing include a bloodstone in the Kremlin, that measures 8.8 cm, the double-sided lapis lazuli in the Louvre, which measures 8.3 cm, and the sardonyx in the reliquary cross of Prague, which measures 6.6 cm (nos. 21, 56, 139).[22] The large size of these gems and the fact that several are carved from precious colored stones such as amethyst and lapis lazuli attests to the dignity of the subject matter and the wealth

[20] Ibid., 131-148. On the coin of Zoe see Grierson and Bellinger, *Catalogue of Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection* vol. 3, no. 1, 162-163.

[21] Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii*, vol. 2, 122, no. 635.

[22] On the bloodstone in the Kremlin see ibid., 120 no. 631. On the lapis lazuli in the Louvre see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance*, 284 no. 195. On the sardonyx in the reliquary cross of Prague see Bauer, "The Reliquary Coronation Cross from the St. Vitus Treasury," 2.

and status of the patrons. So does the fact that the prototypes for the standing figure of Christ were icons with imperial associations.

The image of Christ Standing is represented on the bloodstone in the Victoria and Albert Museum that belonged to Emperor Leo VI (no. 1). Christ is pictured standing on a footstool in a *contrapposto* pose. He holds a gospel book in his left hand from below and holds his right hand stretched out in a sling in a gesture of blessing. The halo, gospel book, and footstool are decorated with pearls, a motif that appears on ivory icons of the tenth century.[23] The bloodstone is large, measuring 4.8 cm in height, and on it the figure of Christ appears monumental and sculptural. His body is wrought in high relief and even the halo and footstool are represented in three-dimensions. The halo juts out beyond the carved frame, bringing Christ into the viewer's space. Christ's outstretched hand indicates that another image is present on the reverse. The image on the reverse is a *globus cruciger*, a symbol of imperial authority that was represented frequently on Byzantine coinage.[24] An inscription runs around and within the *globus cruciger* with the plea "Jesus save Leo the Despot."[25] This inscription provides valuable information about the ownership and function of this bloodstone. It strengthens the assumption that the large, skillfully wrought gems carved during the early part of the middle Byzantine period were owned by imperial individuals. With relatively few produced, they must have been carved in imperial workshops. The personalized, inscribed prayer also confirms that these gems were personal devotional objects that were used to supplicate holy figures.

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[23] On the Romanos Group of ivories see Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, *Die byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen des X. - XIII. Jahrhunderts*, vol. 2, 14-17.

[24] Grierson and Bellinger, *Catalogue of Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection,* vol. 2, no. 1, 86.

[25] IHCON CΩCON ΛEONTA ΔECΠO(την)

The lapis lazuli plaque in the Kremlin may have also belonged to an emperor (no. 22). Measuring 11.8 cm in height, it is too large to have been worn. Instead, it would have been used as a small icon plaque. The standing figure of Christ is elegantly carved and appears monumental within the spacious composition. He stands on a footstool in a *contrapposto* pose holding a gospel book in his right hand and stretching his left arm out in a sling. A *globus cruciger* and the phrase "Jesus Christ is Victorious" are inscribed on the reverse.[26] While the iconography is the same as that of the bloodstone of Emperor Leo VI, the relief on the lapis lazuli is lower and the figure is more slender. This shift away from high relief and strong plastic modeling may have been necessary to counterbalance the statuesque effects caused by the gem's large size and the monumentality of the standing figure.

Not every gem with the image of Christ Standing is large or the figure so statuesque. Over time, gems with the image of Christ Standing become smaller in size and the oval shape replaces the grander shape with the rectangular base and the arched top. Iconographic changes can also be observed over time that occur because the figure becomes more schematized and certain details become lost or obscured. For example, Christ's footstool gradually becomes smaller and more simplified until it is missing entirely, as it is on the chalcedony carving of Christ Standing in Novgorod (no. 151).[27] The gems of a higher quality are an exception to this rule. For example, on the large, skillfully carved sardonyx in the reliquary cross in Prague, all of the essential iconographic elements, including Christ's footstool, are represented (no. 139).[28] This sardonyx dates to the twelfth or thirteenth century.

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[26] I(ησού)C X(ριστό)C NI KA

[27] Darkevich, *Svetskoe iskusstvo Vizantii,* 291-292, no. 415.

[28] Bauer, "The Reliquary Coronation Cross from the St. Vitus Treasury," 2.

The image that appears most frequently on carved gemstones is Christ Pantokrator. Christ Pantokrator is represented on thirty-nine gems. In Pantokrator representations, Christ is represented as a mature adult with a beard and a full head of dark hair that is parted in the middle. His face is long and his expression is serious. The figure of Christ is typically large in relation to the compositional space, making his presence seem overpowering.

The Pantokrator image is one of the most widespread images of Christ in Byzantine art. The name Pantokrator translates to "Ruler of All." It was a term that was originally reserved for praising God the Father in hymns and the liturgy. Therefore, when applied to Christ, it is thought to refer to his divine nature. When the image of Christ is referred to as the Pantokrator in the ninth and tenth century, Christ is described as governing or overseeing the entire earth.[29] The name Pantokrator therefore suggests a divinity who is watchful and omnipresent. These characteristics are reflected in the image by Christ's overpowering presence in the space and by his stern expression.

There is reason to believe that the bust image of Christ Pantokrator that appears on carved gems was drawn from the image of the standing figure. This is because the Pantokrator image that appears on gems is almost never true to the Pantokrator image that appears on coins and mosaics. When Christ appears as the Pantokrator on coins and mosaics, he holds the gospel book from the side with his fingers spread across the cover of the book. In contrast, when represented as the Pantokrator on gems, he usually holds the gospel book from below with his hand covered beneath garments. In his study of the iconography of Byzantine coins, Philip Grierson made a distinction between these two image types. He argued that the type that appears on coins and seals is the true Pantokrator iconography and that it was developed for contexts in which Christ would be pictured

[29] Tom Matthews, "The Byzantine Use of the Title Pantocrator," *Orientalia christiana periodica* 44 (1978): 444-445 and 455-456.

looking down from above, such as the dome of a church. Regarding the other type in which Christ holds the book from below, Grierson asserted that it was not technically a Pantokrator image, but was a different iconographic type that developed from the standing image of Christ.[30] Since the earliest image of Christ on a carved gem is the standing figure, it is reasonable to apply Grierson's findings from coins to gems. Therefore it can be concluded that the bust image of Christ that appears on gems developed out of an earlier image of Christ Standing.

The bust image of Christ holding the gospel book from below remained remarkably fixed on gems throughout the middle Byzantine period and into the thirteenth century. Even the gems of the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries display the gospel book held from below with a hand covered in garments. For example, on the jasper carvings with the image of Christ in Belgrade and Novgorod, the garments that cover his hand are represented with a few abbreviated, angular lines (nos. 172, 175).[31]

Despite Grierson's distinction between the iconography of Christ Pantokrator and the bust image of Christ in which the gospel book is held from below, elsewhere in scholarly literature any bust image of a bearded Christ holding a gospel book and giving a blessing is called the Pantokrator. It has also been found that the title Pantokrator was not associated with the image of Christ that appears in the domes of churches until the twelfth century, and that at that time it was not associated exclusively with one particular image.[32] Therefore, for the sake of consistency as well as for simplicity, I have chosen to categorize all gems with the bust image of the bearded

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[30] Grierson and Bellinger, *Catalogue of Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection* vol. 3, no. 1, 149-151.

[31] On the bloodstone of Christ in Belgrade see Cormack and Vasilakē, *Byzantium, 330-1453*, 230, no. 202. On the red jasper of Christ in Novgorod see Darkevich, *Svetskoe iskusstvo Vizantii,* 291, no. 133.

[32] Matthews, "The Byzantine Use of the Title Pantocrator," 454-462.

Christ under the Pantokrator iconography, with the acknowledgement that in most cases Christ holds the gospel book from below and that this image is not the typical Pantokrator image that appears in church domes and on coins.

Twenty-six of the thirty-nine gems with the image of Christ Pantokrator are bloodstone or red jasper. The other gems are rock crystal, sapphire, lapis, sardonyx, amethyst, and nephrite. Most are round or oval in shape. The sapphire in Dumbarton Oaks is a typical example of the representation of Christ Pantokrator on carved gemstones (no. 105).[33] This gem is oval in shape and measures 3.3 cm in height. Christ is represented in bust form with his right hand held in front of his body in a blessing gesture. His left hand is covered beneath garments and supports a gospel book from below. His hair is parted down the middle, his beard is short, his eyes are blank and almond shaped, and his expression is stoic. The cross nimbus is inscribed instead of carved in relief. Christ's garments fall in soft folds around his body and his collar is decorated with a criss-cross motif.

On a bloodstone in the Hermitage and a rock crystal in the Benaki Museum, Christ holds the gospel book from the side instead of from below (nos. 23, 36).[34] The iconography of these gems was therefore not drawn from a standing figure. Both are inscribed with a title for Christ. This is somewhat unusual on carved gemstones, which are usually inscribed with only a *nomina sacra.* The Benaki rock crystal is inscribed with the title "Pantokrator." It is thought that the inscription was added to the Benaki rock crystal at some time after it was carved, since the

[33] On the sapphire of Christ Pantokrator in Dumbarton Oaks see Asen, Carder, and Nelson, *Sacred Art, Secular Context,* 59, no. 3.

[34] On the rock crystal in the Benaki Museum (no. 36) see Cormack and Vasilakē, *Byzantium, 330-1453*, 230-231, no. 203. On the bloodstone in the Hermitage (no. 23), see Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 120, no. 634.

Pantokrator title was not added to images of Christ until the twelfth century.[35] The Hermitage bloodstone is inscribed with the title "The Merciful."[36] The letters are formed in the same way as those of Christ's *nomina sacra*, which indicates that the inscription is contemporary with the carving of the figure.

In another iconographic variation upon the image of the Pantokrator, Christ holds the gospel book open. Two of the best-known images of this type are both found on narthex mosaics, one of which is at Hosios Loukas and the other which is at Hagia Sophia. The mosaic at Hosios Loukas represents Christ Pantokrator and the mosaic at Hagia Sophia represents Christ seated upon a lyre-backed throne. An emperor, who has been identified as Emperor Leo VI, kneels before him in *proskynesis*. In both mosaics Christ's open book is inscribed with a reference to John 8:12, reads "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life."[37] The image of Christ Pantokrator with the open gospel book appears on bloodstones the British Museum and the Ortiz Collection (nos. 26, 122). The gospel book on the Ortiz bloodstone is not inscribed, but on the British Museum bloodstone it is inscribed with an abbreviation of the phrase "I am the Light of the World" from John 8:12.[38] The image of

[35] Matthews, "The Byzantine Use of the Title Pantocrator," 447.

[36] The inscription on the Benaki gem reads Ο ΠΑΝΤΟΚΡΑΤ(Ο)Ρ. The inscription on the Hermitage gem reads Ο ΕΛΕΗΜΩΝ.

[37] On the mosaic in Hosios Loukas see Lazarides, *The Monastery of Hosios Lukas: Brief Illustrated Archaeological Guide*, 24 no. 9. On the mosaic in Hagia Sophia see Nicolas Oikonomides, "Leo VI and the Narthex Mosaic of Hagia Sophia," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 30 (1976): 153-153. The Biblical text is from Michael D. Coogan, "The Gospel According to John," in The New Oxford Annotated Bible, Oxford Biblical Studies Online, http://www.oxfordbiblicalstudies.com/article/book/obso-9780195288803/obso-9780195288803-div1-4386 (accessed 26-Mar-2015).

[38] ΕΓ ΗΜ ΤΦ ΤΚΟ (Ἐγὼ εἰμι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου). See Dalton, *Catalogue of the Engraved Gems of the Post-Classical Periods in the Department of British and Mediaeval Antiquities,* 2, no. 8. On the bloodstone in the Ortiz Collection, see Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium,* 175, no. 127.

Christ with the open gospel book places special emphasis upon Christ's status as the Incarnate Word of God and is a reminder of the promises of salvation and mercy set forth in the bible.

The image of Christ Enthroned appears on three gems (nos. 10, 27, 35).[39] The earliest of these is the green jasper of Christ Enthroned in the Vatican, which dates to the early tenth century (no. 10). The gem is small and round, with a diameter of 1.9 cm. Christ is depicted holding a gospel book on his knee in his left hand. He holds his right hand out in a blessing gesture. A cross, but no nimbus, is incised behind his head. It is unusual for a nimbus to be omitted in the representation of Christ, but it does occur on coinage in the ninth century and on other works of art in the tenth century, such as the ivory icons of Christ Pantokrator in the Fitzwilliam Museum and the Louvre.[40]

The type of throne upon which Christ sits is called a lyre-backed throne. The lyre-backed throne is characterized by the distinctive shape of its back, which is formed by two stiles that curve inward and a cross bar that connects them at the top. It was been argued that the lyre-backed throne was not a real piece of furniture, but was instead an imaginary throne that was meant to honor Christ with its allusions to the lyres of David and Orpheus. By the eleventh century, the meaning of the lyre-backed throne was gradually forgotten and Christ was rarely represented seated upon it.[41] The gem's iconography and composition suggests that it was

[39] Two of the gems are located in the Vatican Museum (nos. 10 and 35). See Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen in den Sammlungen Italiens," 271, table B. nos. 2 and 3. On no. 10, see also Righetti, "Le opere di Glittica dei Musei Annessi alla Biblioteca Vaticana," 335, table IX, no. 3. One of the gems is located in the Hermitage Museum (no. 27). On this gem see Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 124, no. 644.

[40] Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium,* 136, no. 83.

[41] Cutler, *Transfigurations,* 22-25 and 41-52.

modeled after a tenth-century coin.[42] The gem cutter may have modeled imagery after a coin because of the stone's round format.

On the other two gems, the throne upon which Christ sits is a *threnos,* or a backless throne. This throne is an elaborate, wide stool on top of which sits a large pillow. The legs are often adorned with decorative carving and their width varies from thin spindles to thick posts. On the Hermitage bloodstone, Christ is seated on a small *threnos* (no. 27). The thin legs of the throne are hatched with horizontal cuts that represent ornamentation. Christ holds the gospel book in his left hand and holds his right hand out to the side in a blessing gesture. The same iconographic theme appears in a miniature in the late eleventh-century Barberini Psalter *(Barb. gr. 372 fol. 5r)*.[43] A similar image is carved in very low relief on the twelfth-century serpentine chalice in San Marco, although on the chalice Christ's blessing hand is held in front of him instead of out to the side.[44] The iconography of the Hermitage bloodstone invites a comparison with the mid-eleventh century coin of Emperor Michael IV Paphlagon. The Hermitage bloodstone has been dated to the eleventh century for this reason.[45]

The iconography of the chrysoprase with the image of Christ Enthroned in the Vatican does not correspond to imagery from coinage (no. 35). The gem's large size and rectangular form

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[42] The *solidus* of emperors Leo VI and Constantine VII presents an especially close comparison. On both the gem and the coin Christ's posture, the positioning of his left knee higher than his right knee, and the way that he holds his right hand are represented in exactly the same way. The representation of garments are also identical, especially the way in which they fold over Christ's chest and the manner in which they are stretched over his legs. On coins with the image of Christ Enthroned see Grierson and Bellinger, *Catalogue of Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks collection,* vol. 3, no. 1, 154-158.

[43] Ernst de Wald, "The Comnenian Portraits in the Barberini Psalter," *Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens* 13.1 (1944): 79, no. 1.

[44] Buckton, *The Treasury of San Marco,* 286-290, no. 42.

[45] Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium,* 177-178, no. 131 and Bank, *Prikladnoe Iskusstvo Vizantii*, 124.

allow for ample compositional space around the figure of Christ. Christ, in turn, appears large and monumental. The throne is wide and its legs are carved with ornamental forms. Christ sits upright and faces frontally. He holds his right arm out in a sling and holds a gospel book in his left hand. Busts of angels flank him to the left and right with inscriptions that identify them as the Archangel Michael and the Archangel Gabriel.[46] With Christ's monumental appearance, the image can be compared with the image of Christ Enthroned from the eleventh-century mosaic of Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos and Empress Zoe in Hagia Sophia.[47]

The image of Christ Emmanuel appears on only three gems. One, a sapphire, is now lost but was originally in the Cini Collection in Venice (no. 109). It measured 2.5 cm in height.[48] One is a blue chalcedony located in Novgorod (no. 110). It is oval in shape, measures 2.5 cm in height, and dates to the late twelfth century. It is set into a sixteenth-century Russian *panagia* that belonged to the Archbishop Pimen.[49] The third is a sardonyx that is located in the Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel (no. 197).[50] Wide in form and oval in shape, it measures 2.3 cm in height. It dates to the late Byzantine period.

In the iconography of the Emmanuel, Christ is beardless and appears youthful. He holds a scroll in his left hand and blesses with his right hand. The iconography of Christ Emmanuel is represented in the eleventh-century manuscripts produced by the Stoudios Monastery in

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[46] Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen in den Sammlungen Italiens," table B, no. 3.

[47] On the mosaic see Nelson, *Hagia Sophia, 1850-1950: Holy Wisdom Modern Monument*, 20, no. 19.

[48] Wentzel, "Kameen," 917.

[49] Darkevich, *Svetskoe iskusstvo Vizantii,* 293, no. 417; Pucko, "Neskol'ko vizantijskich kamej iz drevnerusskich gorodov," 117, nos. 2 and 3.

[50] On this and other Byzantine gems in the Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel see Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 92-93.

Constantinople. The image became more common in the twelfth century when it appeared on the coins and seals of Emperor Manuel I Komnenos, who associated himself with the Emmanuel as his namesake. The image of Christ Emmanuel was also frequently represented on the frontispieces of Komnenian manuscripts. The iconography of the youthful Emmanuel represented Christ as the Incarnate Word of God. As an image that represented the Incarnation, it was frequently paired with images of the Virgin. It is thought that the image was popular during Komnenian times because it illustrates a liturgical dogma that developed during that period in which the bread of the Eucharist was believed to be the youthful body of Christ.[51]

The Virgin

After Christ, the Virgin is represented with the second greatest frequency on Byzantine gems. She appears on the obverse on forty-five gems and on the reverse of four gems. These forty-nine gems account for twenty-five percent of the gems in this study. A variety of gemstones were used for carvings with the image of the Virgin, including bloodstone, green jasper, nephrite, amethyst, lapis lazuli, red jasper, blue chalcedony, sardonyx, and serpentine. The gems range in size and shape. Several are measure more than 6 cm in height and one gem, amethyst of the Virgin Orant, measures only 1.8 cm (no. 113).[52]

[51] On the meaning of the iconography of Christ Emmanuel see Kallirroe Linardou, "Depicting the Salvation: Typological Images in the Kokkinobaphos Manuscripts" in Brubaker and Cunningham, *The Cult of the Mother of God in Byzantium,* 141-149 and Carr, "Gospel Frontispieces from the Comnenian Period," 11-19. On the seal of Manuel Komnenos with the image of Christ Emmanuel see Nesbitt and Oikonomides, *Catalogue of Byzantine seals at Dumbarton Oaks*, vol. 6, 180 no. 93.1. On the coin of Manuel Komnenos with the image of Christ Emmanuel see Grierson and Bellinger, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection,* vol. 4, pt. 1, 231.

[52] Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 90, no. 82.

Only one gem with the image of the Virgin is dated to the tenth century. This sardonyx, which is now lost, is inscribed with the name of Emperor Leo VI (no. 2).[53] Most of the gems with the image of the Virgin date to the eleventh and twelfth centuries.[54] This can be explained by the Virgin's importance during these centuries in public cults and as a personal intercessor.[55]

The Virgin had held an elevated status in the Church since the end of Iconoclasm.[56] In the ninth century, influential church officials including George of Nicomedia and Patriarch Photios emphasized the Virgin's central role in the Incarnation and the fact that, as Christ's human mother, she was the ideal intercessor for mankind. These ideas became widely accepted because the Virgin's humanity and motherhood made her someone to whom ordinary believers could relate. By the eleventh century, the Virgin's prominence as the most important holy figure after Christ became firmly established. In the devotional art of the late eleventh and twelfth centuries, the Virgin's emotional connection with her son, her sorrow over his impending death, and her role as the prime mediator for mankind were increasingly emphasized. New iconographic themes such as the *Deesis,* the Hagiosoritissa, and the Eleousa were developed to express these ideas.[57]

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[53] Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 12-13.

[54] Forty out of a total of forty-nine gems with the image of the Virgin date to the eleventh and twelfth centuries. This accounts for eighty-two percent of all of the gems with the image of the Virgin.

[55] On the cult of the Virgin and her icons during the eleventh and twelfth centuries see Annemarie Weyl Carr, "Icons and the Object of Pilgrimage in Middle Byzantine Constantinople" *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 56 (2000): 78-86; Pentcheva, *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium,* 109-187; Pentcheva, "Rhetorical Images of the Virgin," 34-55. The Virgin's increased prominence on coins and seals of the eleventh and twelfth centuries has also been noted. See Grierson and Bellinger, *Catalogue of Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection* vol. 3, pt. 1, 169; Cotsonis, "The Contribution of Byzantine Lead Seals to the Study of the Cult of the Saints," 413.

[56] Kalavrezou, "Images of the Mother," 166-171.

[57] Ibid.

Devotion to the Virgin spanned public and private spheres in Byzantium. Her public cult centered upon her role as the Protectress of Constantinople. During wartime her icon was carried on campaigns and her hymns sung before battle. Emperors visited her miraculous icon at the Blachernae Church before embarking on a military campaign. According to Anna Komnena in *the Alexiad,* Emperor Alexios I Komnenos delayed his departure for battle because the icon failed to perform its miracle. Eventually the miracle took place and the emperor was able to depart.[58]

As the anecdote about Emperor Alexios Komnenos illustrates, public devotion to the Virgin was associated with the emperor. The Virgin's major cult sites, the Blachernae complex and the Hodegon Monastery, both enjoyed imperial patronage. These sites centered first upon the Virgin's miracles or relics and later became associated with her famous icons.[59] The Hodegon monastery was located near the Great Palace. It housed a famous icon of the Virgin and Child, called the Hodegetria, which was honored with a weekly procession through the city.[60] The Blachernae was the most important site of imperial devotion to the Virgin.[61] It housed the Virgin's miraculous spring and several famous icons. One was the icon of the Virgin Nicopoios, which was miraculously discovered behind plaster during a renovation. Another was a marble icon of the Virgin Orant. The third was the icon of the "Usual Miracle," which occurred every Friday. The miracle consisted of a revelation of the icon of the Virgin from behind curtains that

[58] Pentcheva, *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium,* 61-103; Pentcheva, "Rhetorical Images of the Virgin," 46n52; Belting, *Likeness and Presence,* 185.

[59] Carr, "Icons and the Object of Pilgrimage," 86-92.

[60] Pentcheva, *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 121-143, 165-187; Belting, *Likeness and Presence,* 190.

[61] Pitarakis, "*À Propos* de la Vierge orante," 45-46.

were pulled away by some unknown agency.[62] The exact appearance of this icon is not described in any textual source, but it has been argued that it represented the Virgin Orant over which a medallion with the Christ child was superimposed.[63]

In addition to her prominent public presence, the Virgin was also an important figure in private devotional practices of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Her image appears on many different kinds of devotional objects from this period, including lead seals, private icons, and cross-shaped phylacteries.[64] The presence of the Virgin's image on devotional art and personal objects such as seals can be explained by her importance as an intercessor with Christ. The fame and miracles of public icons of the Virgin also contributed to her popularity. Byzantine gems with the image of the Virgin should be understood within this context, since the same iconographic types of the Virgin that appear on devotional art and personal objects in other media appear on carved gemstones.

The question of who may have owned Byzantine gems carved with the image of the Virgin is difficult to answer because the Virgin was a figure who appealed to everyone, regardless of class and gender. Women identified with the Virgin and venerated her as a patron of motherhood, childbirth, and fertility.[65] Men, however, also took the Virgin as their patron and intercessor. The

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[62] Belting, *Likeness and Presence,* 186; Pitarakis, "*À Propos* de la Vierge orante," 45-46; Pentcheva, *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium,* 76-77.

[63] Pentcheva, "Rhetorical Images of the Virgin," 45-50; Eustratios N. Papaioannou, "The Usual Miracle and an Unusual Image. Psellos and the icons of the Blachernae," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 51 (2001): 181-188.

[64] On seals see Cotsonis, "The Contribution of Byzantine Lead Seals to the Study of the Cult of the Saints," 413. On cross-shaped phylacteries see Pitarakis, *Les croix-reliquaires*, 70-74. On phylacteries and other devotional objects see Pitarakis, "*À Propos* de la Vierge orante," 49-55 and Brigitte Pitarakis, "Female piety in context: understanding developments in private devotional practices," in Vassilaki, *Images of the Mother of God: Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium*, 155-159.

[65] Pitarakis, "Female Piety in Context," 156-157.

Virgin's strong appeal for both genders is demonstrated by patterns of ownership on lead seals, which reveal that she was the most popular subject for both men and women.[66] The Virgin was also venerated by members of all social classes. While the high cost of gemstones places some limitations on who could have owned a gemstone *enkolpion*, it is still difficult to identify individuals or groups who were more likely than others to own a gem carved with the Virgin's image. Therefore, the question of ownership will only be discussed when an iconographic theme is strongly associated with a particular group or individual.

Byzantine gems with the image of the Virgin can be categorized into the following iconographic types: the Virgin Orant, the Hagiosoritissa, the Hodegetria, Blachernitissa, the Nikopoios, and the Virgin Enthroned.[67] The Virgin Orant is represented with the greatest frequency and appears on twenty-one gems. In orant images, the Virgin may be standing or represented as a bust. There are two variations of the image of the Virgin Orant. In the first, the Virgin holds her arms stretched out to either side of her body. Her mantle is prominently visible and falls over her arms. In the second type, the Virgin positions her arms in front of her body with her palms facing out. Her mantle is no longer prominently depicted. Both variations are images of intercession.

The first type of orant image is older and had imperial associations. It is thought to have been represented in the monumental images of imperial structures that were built or redecorated in

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[66] John Cotsonis, "Women and Sphragistic Iconography - A Means of Investigating Gender-related piety" *Abstracts of Papers - Byzantine Studies Conference* 19 (1993): 59.

[67] Some of these names were not strictly associated with a specific image type in Byzantium. For example, the name Nicopoios, which means "bringer of victory," was not specifically associated with the image of the Virgin with the child in front of her until the sixteenth century. The title Blachernitissa referred to an icon at the Blachernae complex, but since there were several miraculous icons at the complex the title was not firmly associated with one particular image. I have chosen to use these titles because in Byzantine scholarship they are commonly used to name and categorize the images that I will be discussing. On the problems associating the names with particular image types see Pentcheva, *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 75-80 and Carr, "Icons and the Object of Pilgrimage," 75-92, esp. 75-81.

the middle Byzantine period, including the Chrysotriklinos, the palace chapel of the Pharos, and the Church of the Blachernae. This image of the Virgin Orant was also associated with the imperial defense of the empire. It was chosen in the hopes that the Virgin would shield the realm with her long mantle. In the early tenth century, the image was placed on coins for the first time by Emperor Leo VI. The emperor was desperate for a son, and hoped that his public display of devotion to the Virgin would encourage her to intercede on his behalf and grant him a male heir.[68] While the coin of Emperor Leo VI is famous, it is not widely known that he also owned a gemstone carved with the same image of the Virgin Orant. This sardonyx is now lost, but it is known from an engraving published in 1732 (no. 2). The sardonyx is carved with a bust image of the Virgin Orant with her mantle falling over her outstretched arms. Her *nomina sacra* is carved on the obverse, and the reverse is inscribed with the prayer, "Help Leo the Despot."[69] If the coin of Emperor Leo VI was a public display of devotion to the Virgin, the sardonyx represents an effort to show devotion to the Virgin in a private context.

Most gems carved with this orant image represent the Virgin as a standing figure. Gems with this image are larger than average and are carved with a high level of skill (nos. 38, 39, 51, 56).[70] The red jasper in the British Museum measures 6.4 cm in height and is oval in shape (no.

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[68] Bellinger and Grierson, *Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection,* vol. 3, pt. 2, 508. Pentcheva, *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 26-29 and 75-80; Pitarakis has drawn similar conclusions as to the imperial associations of cross reliquaries with the Virgin Orant that date to the eleventh century. See Pitarakis, *Les croix-reliquaires,* 69-70.

[69] IHCOY CΩCON ΛEONTA ΔECΠO(την) On this gem see Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 12-13.

[70] These gems are the double-sided lapis lazuli in the Louvre, the red jasper in the British Museum, the double-sided nephrite in the Benaki Museum, and the bloodstone in the Hermitage Museum. On the gem in the Louvre, see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 284, no. 195. On the red jasper in the British Museum, see Buckton, *Byzantium: Treasures of Byzantine Art and Culture from British Collections*, 158-159, no. 172. On the bloodstone of the Virgin Orant in the Hermitage see Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 121, no. 633. To my knowledge, the nephrite in the Benaki Museum is unpublished, except for its presence in the online collection catalogue of the museum's website.

51). A carved stone rim surrounds the composition as a frame. The Virgin is represented standing on a platform with her arms held out in the orant gesture. Although the figure is carved in very low relief, it appears monumental as it fills all of the compositional space and even extends slightly into the carved frame. The Virgin's mantle hangs in long folds over her shoulders and is decorated with a stripe motif. Her sleeves fall in horizontal folds. She is identified with an abbreviated *nomina sacra* in which only the *mu* and the *theta* are inscribed.

The Virgin's mantle was prominently depicted in this type of orant image because it referred to the important relic of the Virgin, which was housed at the Blachernae and was famous for working miracles. The prototype for the standing image of the Virgin that appears on carved gems may have been marble icon of the Virgin at the Blachernae complex. The original stone icon at Blachernae is lost, but is thought to have resembled the marble relief icon in the Istanbul Archeological Museum (C14).[71] It was located in the Chapel of St. Photeinos and functioned as a fountain that poured healing water from the miraculous spring. The Emperor visited and honored this stone icon of the Virgin after his ritual bath.[72] The marble icon displays the same iconographic theme that appears on carved gems, in which the Virgin faces frontally and her mantle falls in long folds over her outstretched arms.

The marble icon of the Virgin Orant at the Blachernae would have been an appropriate prototype for gems with the image of the Virgin Orant because it is carved from stone and because, as a fountain, it was associated with water. According to the lapidary tradition,

[71] The marble icon of the Virgin in Istanbul dates to the eleventh century. See Belting, *Likeness and Presence,* 186-188, no. 108.

[72] Ibid., 186.

gemstones were also associated with water.[73] Ekphrastic poems on gemstone *enkolpia* make note of their wet nature with references to ice and dew.[74] Gems carved with the image of the Virgin Orant after the prototype of the stone fountain at the Blachernae may have been intended to harness the curative aspects of the miraculous spring as well as the intercession of the Virgin. Since the Blachernae complex was associated with the emperor, it can be suggested that gems carved with this image of the standing Virgin Orant may have belonged to emperors or members of the imperial family. Their fine workmanship and large size support this hypothesis.

In the other variation on the image of the Virgin Orant that appears on carved gems, the Virgin holds her arms in front of her body with her palms facing out. The image appears on fourteen gems. The most well-known piece that displays this iconography is the serpentine roundel of Nikephoros Botaniates in the Victoria and Albert Museum (no. 41).[75] Its origins are unknown; it may have simply been a variation on the older orant image that was better suited for small formats with little compositional space. In addition to requiring very little compositional space, this image was well suited for gemstones because self-contained figures with their hands held in front of them were easier to carve. This may explain why it is the preferred image for the gems carved during the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries that are characterized by a rough and

[73] In the lapidary tradition, rock crystal was thought to be deeply frozen ice. The glossy, semi-translucent part of a stone that was half jasper and half emerald was considered watery in nature. See Theophrastus, *On Stones,* 109 and Pliny the Elder, "Book XXXVII: The Natural History of Precious Stones," 394-395, chap. 9.

[74] Manuel Philes, *Manuelis Philae Carmina: ex codicibus Escurialensibus, Florentinis, Parisinis et Vaticanis*, ed. E. Miller (Paris: Excusum in Typographeo Imperiali, 1855), 38, poems LXXXVI and LXXXVII, 50, poem CVII.

[75] Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury,* 90-91; Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium,* 176-177, no. 130.

abbreviated carving style.[76] For example, an irregularly-shaped bloodstone in the Cabinet des Médailles is carved with a bust image of the Virgin Orant with her arms held in front of her with her palms facing out (no. 161).[77] Her garments are represented with diagonal incisions with the effect that they appear to be wrapped tightly around her. The long folds of the Virgin's mantle are not represented. The hood of the mantle frames the Virgin's oval shaped face. It is large and loosely carved. Her halo was incised with an unsteady hand. Her *nomina sacra* is inscribed to either side of her figure. The carving style and epigraphy suggest a dating in the early thirteenth century.

The Virgin Hagiosoritissa is represented on nine gems (no. 49, 127, 71, 162, 45, 156, 72, 50, 73).[78] The original icon of the Hagiosoritissa is unknown. The name Hagiosoritissa refers to the "Holy Soros," or the holy reliquary. There were two reliquaries that held famous relics of the Virgin in Constantinople, and scholars do not agree upon which was associated with the icon of the Hagiosoritissa. One reliquary was in the Church of the Chalkoprateia. It held the Virgin's girdle, which is credited for miraculously healing Zoe Zaoutzina, wife of Emperor Leo VI.

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[76] These gems were discussed in Chapter 4. They include, for example, gems with the image of the Virgin Orant in Rostov and Pskov (nos. 169 and 170) On the gem in Rostov see Pucko, "Neskol'ko vizantijskich kamej iz drevnerusskich gorodov," no. 11. On the gem in Pskov (no. 170) see S. V. Iamschikov, *Pskov: Art Treasures and Architectural Monuments, 12th-17th centuries* (St. Petersburg: Aurora Art Publishers, 1978), no. 49.

[77] Guillou and Durand, *Byzance*, 285, no. 196.

[78] One is an amethyst and the others are red jasper, green jasper, and bloodstone. On the gem in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, see Eichler and Kris, *Die Kameen im Kunsthistorischen Museum,* 97 no. 134. On the gem in the Walters, see Miner, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art*, 114, no. 555. On the gem in the Abegg-Stiftung Museum, see Trumpler, *"*Die byzantinische Marienkamee der Abegg-Stiftung in Riggisberg," 9. On the gem in Dumbarton Oaks, see Asen, Carder, and Nelson, *Sacred Art, Secular Context,* 61, no. 6. On the gem in Cividale, see Fogolari, *Cividale del Friuli*, 115-116. On the gem in the Catedral de Léon in Spain, see Gómez-Moreno, *Provinca de León,* 282 no. 388. On the gem in the Vatopedi Monastery see Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 70-71, no. 20. On the gem in Sergiev Posad, see Vera N. Zalesskaja, *Vizantija v kontekste mirovoj kul'tury: materialy Konferencii, Posvjaščennoj Pamjati Alisy Vladimirovny Bank, 1906 – 1984* (Saint Petersburg: Izdat. Gosudarstvennogo Ėrmitaža, 2010), 158, no. 2.

Sirarpie Der Nersessian has proposed that an icon associated with the miraculous girdle at the Church of the Chalkoprateia was the prototype for the image of the Hagiosoritissa.[79] In disagreement, Annabelle Weyl Carr has argued that there is no evidence that links the image to the Church of the Chalkoprateia and that the name "Hagiosoritissa" was associated with multiple images. She suggested instead that the prototype was an icon at the Blachernae complex, which contained several icons and relics of the Virgin.[80]

The Hagiosoritissa image is one of intercession. It is derived from *Deesis* images in which the Virgin and St. John supplicate a figure of Christ, who stands or sits between them. In the Hagiosoritissa image, the Virgin is turned in three-quarter view and stretches both arms out in a gesture of supplication. Christ is frequently pictured as a small figure in the top corner of the composition who responds to the Virgin's supplications with a blessing. Sometimes only his blessing hand is represented. This iconographic theme emerged in the early eleventh century and was represented in monumental church decoration, devotional art, and seals.[81] It first appeared on coins in the twelfth century.[82]

The Virgin Hagiosoritissa was represented frequently on carved gems because it shows the Virgin in the act of intercession. Many images also represent the success of the Virgin's efforts, as Christ is also depicted responding. By wearing a gemstone *enkolpion* with this intercessory image, one would carry with them the Virgin in the act of intercession at all times, thus ensuring

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[79] Der Nersessian, "Two Images of the Virgin in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection," 75-92.

[80] Carr, "Icons and the Object of Pilgrimage," 78-79.

[81] Der Nersessian, "Two Images of the Virgin in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection," 79-83.

[82] The image of the Hagiosoritissa is found on the coins of Manuel I Komnenos (1143-1180) and Isaac II Angelos (1185-1195). See Tommaso. Bertele, "La Vergine aghiosoritissa nella numismatica bizantina" *Revue des études byzantines* 16 (1958): 233-234.

her constant efforts on their behalf. The notion that the Hagiosoritissa image was considered especially effective in guaranteeing personal salvation is supported by the fact that it was frequently paired with donor portraits. Donors liked to be represented in the presence of the Virgin who was actively interceding on their behalf.[83]

On gems with the image of the Hagiosoritissa, the Virgin may be represented standing or in bust. The standing image was reserved for large gems such as the rectangular bloodstone in the Abegg-Stiftung Museum, which measures 6.8 cm in height (no. 50). On smaller gems, such as the bloodstone in Dumbarton Oaks, the figure is usually represented as a bust (no. 71). This oval-shaped bloodstone measures 3.5 cm in height. The Virgin is represented turning to the left and raising her arms, head, and eyes in the same direction. Her figure is carved in such a way that a streak of red stone follows the diagonal curve of her twisting body. This splash of color activates her already dynamic pose. The hand of Christ emerges in the upper corner. The Virgin's *nomina sacra* is inscribed to either side of her figure. This bloodstone is dated to the early twelfth century.[84]

The Virgin Hodegetria is represented on six gems, all of which are bloodstones (nos. 80, 128, 79, 81, 77, 78).[85] Four represent standing figures and two represent busts. In the

[83] Der Nersessian, "Two Images of the Virgin in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection," 84-85.

[84] The bloodstone of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa in Dumbarton Oaks relates closely with a bloodstone of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa in the Catedral de Léon (no. 73). The bloodstone in Léon is set into a reliquary that was donated to the cathedral in 1128, which provides a *terminus ante quem*. See Manuel Gómez-Moreno, *Provinca de León (1906-1908),* 282, no. 388.

[85] Two gems with the image of the Virgin Hodegetria are located in the British Museum, one is in the Cabinet des Médailles, one is in the Vatopedi Monastery, one is in the Vatican Museum, and one is in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum of Berlin. On the gems in the British Museum see Dalton, *Catalogue of the Engraved Gems of the Post-Classical Periods in the Department of British and Mediaeval Antiquities,* 3, nos. 12 and 13. On the gem in the Cabinet des Médailles, see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 286, no. 199. On the gem in the Vatopedi Monastery, see Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 56-57, no. 15. On the gem in the Vatican see Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen in

iconography of the Hodegetria, the Virgin holds the Christ child in her left arm and gestures towards him with her right hand. Her head sometimes tilts towards him. Christ holds his right hand in a blessing gesture and holds a scroll in his left hand. The hand gestures of the Virgin and Christ were meant to signify speech; the Virgin supplicates Christ and he responds with a blessing. This iconographic type derives from the famous icon of the Hodegon Monastery of Constantinople.[86] This monastery's importance originally stemmed from its miraculous spring, which gave forth water that could heal the blind. The monastery received the name *Hodegoi* (Ὁδηγοί), or the "Pointers of the way," because of the spring's reputation for healing blindness. The monastery's association with miracles remained over time, but they eventually became attributed to the icon of the Virgin Hodegetria.[87]

The Hodegetria icon is connected with a long history of legends and miracles.[88] It was said to have been painted by the Apostle Luke and was therefore considered an authentic portrait of the Virgin and Child. The first record of its existence as a cult icon dates to the tenth century, and by the eleventh century the icon was credited retroactively with saving the city during the Avar siege, which had occurred centuries earlier. As noted already, starting in the eleventh century the Hodegetria icon was honored by a weekly procession that occurred on Tuesdays. This ritual lasted until the end of the Palaeologian period. By the twelfth century, the Hodegetria icon was of such importance that Emperor John II Komnenos stipulated that the icon should be taken to

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den Sammlungen Italiens," 271, table B, nos. 10 and 12. On the gem in Berlin, see Volbach, *Mittelalterliche Bildwerke aus Italien und Byzanz*, 125 no. 763.

[86] Pentcheva, *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium,* 109-143.

[87] Robert Lee Wolff, "Footnote to an Incident of the Latin Occupation of Constantinople: The Church and the Icon of the Hodegetria," *Traditio* 6 (1948): 322.

[88] Pentcheva, *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 109-143.

his tomb on an annual basis as part of a commemorative funerary rite.[89] Given the image's importance in society and its association with miracles, it is unsurprising that it is also represented on small works of devotional art such as carved gems.

The Hodegetria image is thought to represent the Incarnation as well as the Virgin's status as an intercessor with Christ.[90] The Virgin and Child pictured together had long been associated with the Incarnation, as they were a visual reminder of the Virgin's motherhood and her role in bringing Christ into the world. Images that emphasized the Virgin's motherhood also conveyed her intercessory role.[91] When the Hodegetria image was represented on gemstone *enkolpia*, the owners of the objects must have hoped for the Virgin's intercession with Christ. They may have felt a special connection with the Virgin's motherhood, or they may have been interested in the dogma of the Incarnation. It is also possible that they chose the Hodegetria image because, like Emperor John II Komnenos, they hoped to channel some of its miraculous qualities for themselves. It should also be noted that there was a confraternity of men who were especially devoted to the icon of the Virgin Hodegetria and who shared the responsibility of caring for it.[92] A member of the confraternity, or someone who felt strong devotion towards the Hodegetria icon, may have owned a gem carved with the Hodegetria image.

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[89] Ibid., 37-59 (the Avar Siege), 109-143 (the Hodegetria icon), 173 (the Hodegetria icon in the funerary rites of Emperor John II Komnenos).

[90] Ibid., 114-117; Der Nersessian, "Two Images of the Virgin in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection," 74-75.
[91] Kalavrezou, "Images of the Mother," 169-172.

[92] Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, "Servants of the Holy Icon" in *Byzantine East, Latin West. Art Historical Studies in Honor of Kurt Weitzmann* ed. C. Moss and K. Kiefer (Princeton NJ: Dept. of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University, 1995), 547-553.

Five gems are carved with an image of the Virgin that is sometimes called the Blachernitissa (nos. 54, 53, 52, 163, 165).[93] In this image, the Virgin is represented as a bust figure in an orant pose. A bust of Christ is superimposed in front of her. Christ is represented as the Emmanuel with a youthful face and a scroll in his left hand. He rests in the center of the Virgin's *maphorion.* The softly rounded form of the *maphorion* rounds out the lower half of the bust figure so that it appears circular or oval in shape. To compliment this form, only round or oval shaped stones are chosen for this iconographic image.

The name of this image requires further clarification. In art-historical scholarship, the name Blachernitissa has also been associated with a different image in which Christ hovers in a medallion in front of the Virgin's body. This second image is sometimes also called the Platytera or the Epikepsis, and it does not appear on Byzantine carved gems. It appears more often in images that had a public presence, such as coins and monumental mosaics.[94] The image that appears on carved gems was called the Virgin Zoodochos Pege in the fourteenth century. In the middle Byzantine period, however, at which time the gems were carved, the image was not

[93] The gems carved with an image of the Virgin Blachernitissa are a bloodstone in the Victoria and Albert Museum, a blue chalcedony in the Kremlin, a sardonyx in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, a bloodstone in the Tretyakov Gallery, and a green jasper in the Chilandar Monastery. On the gem in the Victoria and Albert Museum see Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury,* 86-87, a. On the blue chalcedony in the Kremlin, see Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 212-213, no. 31. On the sardonyx in the Kunsthistorisches Museum see Eichler and Kris, *Die Kameen im Kunsthistorischen Museum*, 94 no. 126. On the bloodstone in the Tretyakov gallery see Teteriatnikov, "The Image of the Virgin Zoodochos Pege," 236, no. 19.5. On the gem in the Chilandar monastery see Popovich, "An examination of the Chilandar cameos," 19-22, no. 18.

[94] Pentcheva notes that the Blachernitissa image is a toponymic name and in the middle Byzantine period was not used exclusively to refer to the Epikepsis image. For this discussion and more information on the iconography of the Blachernitissa image in which Christ hovers in the medallion, see Pentcheva, "Rhetorical Images of the Virgin," 34-55, esp. 36-37. The Blachernitissa image with the medallion does not appear on Byzantine gems but does appear on some post-Byzantine gems of Russian origins.

named. It is found frequently on personal objects such as carved gems, cross-shaped *enkolpia,* and seals belonging to church officials.[95]

A connection has been drawn between the Blachernitissa image and the liturgical rite of the *proskomide*, which emerged in the eleventh century. In this rite, the Eucharist bread was elevated on a *panagia* in order to honor the Virgin and her role in the Incarnation. The bread symbolized the incarnate body of Christ and the *panagia* upon which it rested symbolized the Virgin as the vehicle of the Incarnation. The image of the Blachernitissa evokes the same message as the ritual because it represents the Virgin presenting the incarnate Christ to the world. It emphasizes her motherhood and therefore both her role in the Incarnation and her ability to influence her son as an intercessor.[96] The image that appears on gems therefore has a dual meaning as an image of intercession and as one that visualizes the important dogma of the Incarnation

The sardonyx of the Virgin Blachernitissa in the Kunsthistorisches Museum may be described as an example (no. 54). It measures 2.9 cm in height and is perfectly round. The figure of the Virgin is carved from white stone and the background stone is of a dark, golden-brown hue. This stone is skillfully carved in high relief. Plastic modeling is employed to create softly rounded forms. This is especially noticeable in the Virgin's face, which appears youthful and round. She holds her arms out to the side in the orant gesture. Her sleeves fall in a series of small ripple-like folds. Her *maphorion* is wrapped around her body in horizontal folds. It falls over her outstretched arms and is stretched across her middle. The Christ child is represented in the center of the *maphorion*. He holds a scroll in his left hand and blesses with his right hand.

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[95] Teteriatnikov, "The Image of the Virgin Zoodochos Pege," 225-238 and Pitarakis *À Propos* de la Vierge orante," 51-55.

[96] Pitarakis, *À Propos* de la Vierge orante," 49-51.

Only one gem is carved with an image of the Virgin Nikopoios. Here, the name "Nikopoios" is used tentatively as it does not strictly correspond to one image type. In scholarship it usually refers to the image of the Virgin holding the Christ child in front of her chest. An example of one such image is the icon of the Virgin Nikopoios in San Marco.[97] This icon did not come to be called the Nikopoios until the sixteenth century, however, and there is evidence that in Byzantium the name could be used to refer to several different image types. It meant "bringer of victory" and was the name of the icon of the Virgin that was carried in battle.[98]

The gem with the image of the Virgin Nikopoios is a blue chalcedony that measures 3.6 cm in height. It is located in the Kremlin Museum (no. 116). Although technically oval in shape, it is nearly as wide as it is tall. This chalcedony is stylistically and technically related to an amethyst carving of the Virgin Orant in the Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel that dates to the late twelfth or early thirteenth century (no. 113). The Kremlin chalcedony is carved with a bust image of the Virgin holding the Christ child in front of her body. Christ holds a scroll in his left hand and holds his right hand in a blessing gesture. Unlike the Blachernitissa image, in which the Virgin's hands are held to the side, on the Nikopoios image her hands are placed on the child in front of her. The image's closeness with the Blachernitissa is noted in order to suggest that on carved gemstones, the Nikopoios theme may have held similar meaning concerning the Virgin's motherhood, her role in the Incarnation, and her ability to intercede with her son.

The image of the Virgin Enthroned is represented on five gems. In these images the Virgin holds Christ in front of her body or to the side in the Hodegetria pose. This iconographic type may be further divided based upon the types of throne upon which the Virgin sits. The Virgin is

[97] On this image see Pentcheva, *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium,* 81, no. 48.

[98] Ibid., 77-81.

seated upon the *threnos,* or backless throne, on three gems. She is represented on the lyre-backed throne on one gem and on the square-backed throne on another gem.[99]

The three gems carved with the image of the Virgin seated on the backless throne are a bloodstone in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin, a sapphire in the Kremlin, and a blue chalcedony in the Metropolitan Museum (nos. 74, 134, 75).[100] On these gems the Virgin is seated frontally on a backless throne. She holds the Christ child directly in front of her. The Kremlin sapphire and the bloodstone in Berlin have simple compositions and share a similar figure style. On both gems throne is slender and narrow and there is only one pillow. The Virgin's slim figure is represented through angular cuts, her face tilts upward, and her nose is triangular in shape. In Chapter Four, I argued that these gems are related to each other and to several bloodstones with the image of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa from the early twelfth century. The chalcedony in the Metropolitan Museum displays different iconography (no. 134). The throne is wide, sturdy, and ornamented with decorative carving. There are two pillows on the throne instead of just one, and angels are represented on both sides of the Virgin. The closest parallel for the image on the chalcedony in the Metropolitan Museum the image of the Virgin Enthroned in the apse mosaic of Hagia Sophia.[101]

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[99] Scholars have studied the different thronal types that appear in Byzantine art and have tried to associate iconographic details such as the shape and number of cushions with specific time periods. The image of the Virgin seated upon a backless throne has proven especially difficult to date because it appears over the span of five centuries across many types of media including coins, seals, mosaics, and ivory icons. See Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images,* 164-165; Cutler, *Transfigurations,* 5-52; Galavaris, "The Representation of Virgin and Child on a "Thokos" on seals of the Constantinopolitan Patriarchs," *Deltion of the Christian Archaeological Society* 20 (1962): 153-181.

[100] On the bloodstone in Berlin, see Volbach, *Mittelalterliche Bildwerke aus Italien und Byzanz*, 125, no. 2737. On the sapphire of the Virgin Enthroned in the Kremlin, see Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 221-223, no. 35. On the blue chalcedony of the Virgin Enthroned in the Metropolitan Museum, see Draper, "Cameo Appearances," 18, no. 28.

[101] Galavaris, "The Representation of Virgin and Child on a "Thokos" on seals of the Constantinopolitan Patriarchs," plate 58, no. 5.

The image of the Virgin seated upon the lyre-backed throne is relatively rare. It is only represented on one gem, a lapis lazuli carving in the Kremlin that dates to the early twelfth century (no. 55).[102] This large gem measures 7 cm in height. It has a rectangular base and a trefoil-shaped top. The legs and stiles of the lyre-backed throne are carved with shapes that are probably intended to be decorative; Alisa Bank has argued against the possibility they were once filled with stones.[103] The gem is skillfully carved in low relief. The figures of the Virgin and Christ are slender and elegant. The Virgin holds Christ to the left side and tilts her head, but does not gesture towards him as she does in Hodegetria images. The Christ child holds a scroll in his left hand and holds his right hand out in a blessing gesture.

As noted already regarding a gem with the image of Christ Enthroned, the lyre-backed throne is thought to be an imaginary throne that was originally paired with images of Christ. The Virgin is only occasionally represented seated upon the lyre-backed throne in the tenth and eleventh centuries. She is always accompanied by the Christ child. Anthony Cutler has interpreted to mean that the throne never lost its original association with Christ and that the image of the Virgin and Christ on the lyre-backed throne refers to the Virgin's relationship with Christ as his human mother.[104]

The Virgin is represented seated upon a square-backed throne on a single gem, the double-sided bloodstone in the Kanellopoulos Museum (no. 126).[105] St. Panteleimon is represented on the

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[102] Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 124, no. 642; Bank, *Prikladnoe Iskusstvo Vizantii*, 128; Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 216-218, no. 33.

[103] Bank, *Prikladnoe Iskusstvo Vizantii,* 128.

[104] Anthony Cutler, *Transfigurations*, 14-16.

[105] Chatzidakis and Scampavias, *The Paul and Alexandra Canellopoulos Museum,* 97, no. 90.

reverse. This bloodstone measures 4.5 cm in height and is shaped with a rectangular base and an arched top. The Virgin holds the Christ child on her left knee in the manner of the Hodegetria image type. The back of the throne is high, square in shape, and decorated with a diamond pattern. The gem has been dated to the late twelfth century based upon its carving style. Since a physician saint is represented on the reverse, it can be assumed that the owner of the bloodstone hoped to benefit from the Virgin's mercy and intercession as well as from St. Panteleimon's miraculous healing.

The image of the Virgin seated on a square-backed throne appears on the coin of Emperor Isaac Angelos in the late twelfth century and on lead seals from the eleventh through thirteenth centuries. It appears predominantly on the lead seals of church officials.[106] In fact, church officials owned most of the seals with the image of the Virgin Enthroned, regardless of the type of throne that was represented. Many of these officials were patriarchs, who may have chosen the image because of its likeness to the mosaic with the image of the Virgin Enthroned at Hagia Sophia.[107] With this in mind, it can be suggested that some of the gems carved with the image of the Virgin Enthroned belonged to patriarchs.

St. John the Baptist

[106] For an example from the eleventh or twelfth century see the seal of the bishop of Erythra in Nesbitt and Oikonomides, *Catalogue of Byzantine seals at Dumbarton Oaks,* vol. 3, 34, no. 15.1. N. For a twelfth-century example see the seal of John, Metropolitan of Thessaloniki, see ibid., vol. 1, 80, no. 18.85. For a thirteenth-century example see Zacos and Veglery, *Byzantine Lead Seals,* vol. 2, 39, no. 34.

[107] For seals of the Patriarchs see Zacos and Veglery, *Byzantine Lead Seals,* vol. 2, 1-68. Galavaris connected the images of patriarchal seals to the mosaic image in Hagia Sophia in "The Representation of Virgin and Child on a Thokos," 158-159.

St. John the Baptist is represented on twelve gems. The majority date from the late tenth through the thirteenth centuries and one, the sardonyx in the Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel, dates to the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries. Five are carved from bloodstone or red jasper, four are sardonyxes, one is a sapphire, and one is a green jasper. They measure close to the average size of 3.7 cm, with the smallest measuring 1.9 cm and the largest measuring 4.7 cm. Many are oval in shape. The bloodstone in the Cini Collection has a rectangular base and an arched top (no. 118).[108]

John the Baptist was a popular saint in Byzantium. As the first Christian ascetic, he was revered by the Church Fathers and served as a model for monks. His appeal extended far beyond the sphere of the Church, however, because of the major role that he played in the life of Christ. He was Christ's cousin and friend, and was the first to declare Christ's identity as the Savior.[109] Revered primarily as an intercessor, he was often represented with the Virgin and Christ in *Deesis* images, which visually express the act of intercession. In *Deesis* images the Virgin and St. John the Baptist stand on either side Christ, who stands frontally and holds his hand out in a blessing gesture. The Virgin and St. John the Baptist hold their hands held out towards Christ in gestures of intercession as they plead for the salvation of mankind. The Virgin and St. John the Baptist were considered the most effective intercessors with Christ because the Virgin was Christ's mother and the Baptist was the Forerunner who paved Christ's way on Earth by declaring his

[108] Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 10-12, nos. 2 and 3.

[109] Edmondo F. Lupieri, "John the Baptist: The First Monk- A Contribution to the History of the Figure of John the Baptist in the Early Monastic World," *Word and Spirit: A Monastic Review* 6.6 (1984): 13-21. Cited in Cotsonis, "Byzantine lead seals and the cult of the saints," 417-418.

divinity and preaching repentance.[110] The *Deesis* theme is rarely represented on Byzantine gems, which is unsurprising given that portrait images were favored over multi-figured compositions.[111]

Although the *Deesis* was not represented frequently on carved gems, a double-sided bloodstone in the Vatican expresses a similar theme (no. 77).[112] The three holy figures who typically appear in *Deesis* images are represented, with the Virgin holding Christ pictured on the obverse and St. John the Baptist represented on the reverse. The Virgin and Christ are represented in the Hodegetria image, an iconographic theme that demonstrates the Virgin's close relationship with her son and her subsequent ability to influence him in matters of intercession. The Baptist is represented standing and holding a patriarchal staff, which calls to mind his role in Christ's baptism. His chest is bare, but he wears a *chiton* that is fastened over his left shoulder. The Baptist's bare chest and slender body recall his life as an ascetic in the desert. He holds his right hand in front of his body in a gesture that signifies speech. Speech is an important aspect of the Baptist's identity because of his role in recognizing and declaring the divinity of Christ. With John the Baptist, the Virgin, and Christ pictured together on the same gem, the intercessory theme of the *Deesis* is conveyed with different imagery.

The bare-chested Baptist holding a cross-topped staff and gesturing in speech appears on seven gems. Small iconographic variations can be identified among them, such as the angle at which the patriarchal cross is held. On gems that have narrow compositional formats, such as the

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[110] Doula Mouriki, "A Deësis icon in the Art Museum," *Record of the Art Museum, Princeton University* 27.1 (1968): 14-16; Cotsonis, "Byzantine lead seals and the cult of the saints," 417-418; Pitarakis, *Les croix-reliquaires,* 95.

[111] The *Deesis* is represented in itaglio on the reverse of a seventh-century sardonyx carving of the Annunciation in the Cabinet des Médailles. See Guillou and Durand, Byzance, 277, no. 184.

[112] On this gem see Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen in den Sammlungen Italiens," 271, table B, nos. 10 and 12.

sardonyx in the Hermitage (no. 136), the cross is placed closer to the center of the body and is held out at an angle.[113] On wider gems with more compositional space, such as the red jasper in the Walters Art Gallery (no. 119), the staff is held upright.[114] Another iconographic variation concerns the appearance of the Baptist's hair, which is represented in a disheveled manner on two out of seven gems. Although John Cotsonis has demonstrated that disheveled hair becomes a standard element of the Baptist's portrait type on lead seals as early as the eleventh century, on gems this iconographic element only appears as early as the late twelfth or thirteenth century.[115] It is possible that disheveled hair was rarely represented on carved gemstones because older iconographic themes were preserved, or because it was more difficult to represent in stone. The tangled hair requires plastic modeling to represent, while neatly combed hair can be represented with linear incisions.

By the twelfth century, St. John the Baptist is represented in an ascetic manner on carved gems. The emaciation of his body is emphasized through the slenderness of his right arm and the articulation of his ribs. The Baptist's body appears especially emaciated on the sardonyx in the Vatican and the bloodstone in the Cini Collection (nos. 137, 118).[116] The ascetic nature of the Baptist's thin body offers an interesting contrast to the rich material in which it is carved. The luxurious nature of carved gemstones seems more appropriate for King Herod than for a hermit who lived in the desert and ate locusts. The contrast may be intentional in order to demonstrate

[113] Bank, "Vier byzantinisierende Kameen aus der Ermitage," 11-12, no. 1.

[114] Miner, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art*, 114, no. 559.

[115] Cotsonis, "Byzantine Lead Seals and the Cult of the Saints," 415.

[116] On the sardonyx in the Vatican, see Wentzel "Mittelalterliche Gemmen in den Sammlungen Italiens," 271 no. 819. On the bloodstone in the Cini Collection, see Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 10-12, nos. 2 and 3.

that the Baptist was more precious than jewels. This conceit is found sometimes in the writings of John Chrysostom, who honored the Word of God or holy figures by declaring them to be more precious than precious stones.[117]

The iconographic theme of the bare-chested, emaciated Baptist holding his right hand in a gesture of speech also appears on middle Byzantine lead seals.[118] The theme appears, for example, on two twelfth-century seals at Dumbarton Oaks, one of which belonged to the monastery of St. John the Baptist at Petra.[119] The theme of John the Baptist with a bare chest is found on painted icons and frescos from the late Byzantine period as well, such as a fourteenth-century icon in the Menil Collection.[120]

The bloodstone with the image of St. John the Baptist in the Kunsthistorisches Museum displays iconography that is drawn from the image of Christ Pantokrator (no. 15).[121] The image of the Baptist fills the round composition completely. His face is full and healthy, and his hair falls to his shoulders in waves. His body is fully covered by garments. Although the image of the Baptist resembles Christ, his identity is made clear by the inscription, the attribute of the patriarchal cross, and the lack of a cross within the nimbus. An iconographic comparison may be

[117] For example, John Chrysostom declares that the Word of God surpasses the nature of precious stones. John Chrysostom, *The Homilies of S. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, on the Gospel of St. John,* trans. G. T. Stupart (Oxford: J.H. Parker, 1848), 5.

[118] Citing Likachev, Bank identifies the late eleventh century as the time when the Baptist's bare chest is first represented on lead seals. See Bank, "Vier byzantinisierende Kameen aus der Ermitage," 13.

[119] Nesbitt and Oikonomides, *Catalogue of Byzantine seals at Dumbarton Oaks,* vol. 5, 42, no. 19.5 and 132, no. 80.2.

[120] Annemarie Weyl Carr, Bertrand Davezac, and Clare Elliott, *Imprinting the Divine: Byzantine and Russian Icons from the Menil Collection* (Houston: Menil Collection, 2011), 52-53, no. 9.

[121] On this gem see Eichler and Kris, *Die Kameen im Kunsthistorischen Museum,* 94, no. 127.

made with an ivory plaque in the Victoria and Albert Museum, which is also carved with the image of the Baptist in the style of Christ Pantokrator.[122]

John the Baptist is represented standing and holding a scroll on three of the gems with his image. The earliest of these is the bloodstone in s'Gravenhage, which dates to the eleventh century (no. 76).[123] The Baptist stands frontally, gestures inward with his right hand and holds an open scroll in his left hand. Letters are inscribed on the scroll, but they are difficult to decipher. The same image is carved on a sardonyx in the Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel, which dates to the late Byzantine period (no. 196).[124] The image on the sardonyx of St. John the Baptist in the British Museum is slightly different (no. 138).[125] On this gem, which dates to the twelfth or thirteenth century, the Baptist is represented turned to the left and gesturing towards the Hand of God, which appears in the top corner of the composition. A tree and an axe are depicted beside the Baptist and the word "Repent" is inscribed on the scroll.[126] The tree, axe, and inscription are references to the biblical passage in which sinners are urged, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near" (Matthew 3:2).[127] The iconographic theme appears on Byzantine art as early as the eleventh century, when it appears on the Khakhuli Triptych.[128] The theme and variations upon

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[122] Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury*, 168-169.

[123] Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 96n89, no. 89.

[124] Ibid., 92-93, no. 84.

[125] Dalton, *Catalogue of the Engraved Gems of the Post-Classical Periods in the Department of British and Mediaeval Antiquities,* 2 no. 7.

[126] METANO(εῖτε)

[127] Coogan, "The Gospel According to Matthew," in The New Oxford Annotated Bible, http://www.oxfordbiblicalstudies.com/article/book/obso-9780195288803/obso-9780195288803-div1-1181 (accessed 26-Mar-2015).

[128] On the iconography of John the Baptist on the Khakhuli Triptych see Kalavrezou, "Female Popular Beliefs and Maria of Alania," 88-93.

it also appear on *enkolpia* from the late Byzantine period, such as the thirteenth-century steatite in Berlin and the fourteenth-century steatite in the Vatopedi Monastery.[129] When it appeared on *enkolpia* of gemstone and steatite, the theme of St. John the Baptist holding a scroll must have served as a reminder of the need for repentance.

The Archangel Michael and Warrior Saints

Warrior saints and the Archangel Michael are represented on forty gems, which account for twelve percent of those in this study. Considered together as a group, they rank just behind the Virgin in terms of frequency of representation on carved gemstones. Warrior saints and the Archangel Michael were favored subjects for gemstone *enkolpia* because they were associated with protection. Their protections spanned the physical and spiritual realms and included help with resisting temptation, defense from evil spirits, and intercession at the time of death.

Although warrior saints and the Archangel Michael held a special appeal for soldiers, generals, and military emperors, the broad protections that they offered also made them popular with individuals from all areas of society.[130] Devotion to a warrior saint could be influenced by

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[129] For the thirteenth-century steatite see Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 189, no. 111. For the fourteenth-century steatite see Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 124-125, no. 43.

[130] For example, Cotsonis' study of lead seals revealed that while seals with images of warrior saints were primary owned by those with military careers, they were also owned by individuals with careers in the civil administration and the Church. See Cotsonis, "Byzantine lead seals and the cult of the saints," 441-471. For an example of a lead seal with an image of a warrior saint owned by an individual who was not in the

many factors including name, family tradition, profession, or devotion to a local cult such as the cult of St. Demetrios in Thessaloniki.[131] The cult of the Archangel Michael was especially widespread, as he was seen as a helper and protector in all aspects of daily life, for commoners and emperors alike.[132] By wearing an *enkolpion* carved with the image of a warrior saint or the Archangel Michael, one hoped to carry with them the holy presence, assistance, and protection of that saint throughout the day. This sentiment is expressed in an epigram by Theodore Balsamon that was written about an icon of St. Theodore Stratelates. Although the epigram does not identify the material of the icon, the play upon the words "stone" and "heart" and the reference to a woven silver thread suggests that the icon was an *enkolpion* of stone. The references to fire and sparks indicate that the stone was probably a bloodstone. This idea is confirmed by another of Balsamon's poems written on the "same icon" in which the material is described as a combination of "fire" and "dew." These metaphors often appear in poems written about carved bloodstones. Balsamon's poem on St. Theodore Stratelates has been transcribed with an English translation below.[133]

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military see the seal of Nicholas *spatharokandidatos* and *chrysoteles* of Sardeis, who held a position related to taxation. On this seal see Nesbitt and Oikonomides, *Catalogue of Byzantine seals at Dumbarton Oaks*, vol. 3, 46, no. 32.1.

[131] Jean-Claude Cheynet, "Par Saint George, par Saint Michele," *Travaux et Mémoires* 14 (2002): 116-128.

[132] Bernadette Martin-Hisard, "Le culte de l'archange Michel dans l'empire byzantin" in *Culto e insediamenti micaelici nell'Italia meridionale fra tarda antichità e medioevo: atti del Convegno internazionale, Monte Sant'Angelo, 18-21 novembre 1992*, eds. Carlo Carletti and Giorgio Otranto (Bari: Edipuglia, 1994), 353-361; C. Jolivet-Levy, "Culte et iconographie de l'archange Michel dans l'Orient byzantin: le témoignage de quelques monuments de Cappadoce," *Cahiers de Saint-Michel de Cuxa* 28 (1997): 196-198.

[133] Both poems published in Konstantine Horna, "Die Epigramme des Theodore Balsamon" *Wiener Studien* 25 (1903): 189-190, poems XXIV A and B. As demonstrated in Chapter Nine, in poems written about carved gemstones, the red inclusions in bloodstone were often compared to fire, while the glossy green parts of the stone were compared to dew.

Εἰς ἁγίαν εἰκόνα τοῦ ἁγίου Θεοδώρου τοῦ στρατηλάτου.

Ἐγκάρδιον πῦρ ἀστραπηφόρου πόθου
πρὸς καρδίαν λίθινον ἐκσπινθηρίσας
ἐξ ὀστρέου μάργαρον ἐπλούτησά σε,
μάρτυς, Θεοῦ δώρημα προσκυνητέον.
ὡς ἔμπορος γοῦν ἀντὶ πολλῶν χρημάτων
ἔσχον σε θησαύρισμα τοῦ γήρως μέγα.
πῶς σοι τολοιπὸν ἀντιμετρήσω χάριν,
πολλῶν ῥυσαμένῳ με πειρατηρίων
καὶ διπλοτριπλάσαντι τὴν προστασίαν;
πένησσα χεὶρ εὔχρηστος ἐστὶ λαμβάνειν,
δοῦναι δέ τι δύσχρηστος ἐστὶ καὶ τρέμει·
ὅθεν πρὸς ἀπόδειξιν εὐχαριστίας
ἀργυροχρυσόμικτον ὑφάνας κρόκην
τῷ μαρτυρικῷ προστίθημι μανδύᾳ,
ὅν σοι θεὸς δέδωκεν ὡς στρατηλάτῃ·
ἀλλ᾽ ἀντὶ τούτου καὶ πάλιν πάρασχέ μοι
πειρασμολυτήριον ἔντοκον χρέος.

On a Holy Icon of St. Theodore Stratelates.

A fire of flashing desire is in my heart
from a stone heart of sparking material.
I was rich from the pearl of an oyster
martyr, gift of God who must be worshipped.
Just like, at any rate, a merchant of many goods,
I carried you as a great treasure in my old age.
How will I ever reciprocate your grace,
you who saved me from many trials
and doubled and tripled my patronage?
The hand is useful for taking from the poor
But it trembles uselessly in giving.
Whence, as proof of my thankfulness,
having woven a silver-gilt thread,
I give also to the cape and martyr's cross
Which God had given to you, General.
Otherwise, in return for this, hand over to me once again
deliverance from temptation as a debt bearing interest.

This epigram reveals that the physical feeling of the stone over the individual's heart is a reminder of the saint's constant presence. It encourages the wearer to resist temptation and assures him of the saint's protection, which is "doubled" and "tripled" as a result of the closeness

created by wearing the *enkolpion*. The saint is credited not only for providing protection, which implies physical defense, but also for saving the individual, which constitutes spiritual protection. Interestingly, despite the fact that St. Theodore Stratelates is a warrior saint, the owner of the *enkolpion* does not seem to have a military career. Instead, the allusions to richness, debt, and interest bring to mind the life of a merchant.

The iconography of gems with images of warrior saints and the Archangel Michael provides further evidence that the presence of these saints on gemstone *enkolpia* was meant to be protective. On almost every piece, the figures are represented as warriors instead of as martyrs. The few exceptions can be dated to the tenth century or to the eleventh century, at the latest. The early eleventh century has been identified as the time at which the iconography of martyred soldier saints shifts and military attire replaces the *chlamys* and martyrs' cross. This has been attributed to social conditions that existed throughout the tenth century, including the influence of military emperors, fears of invasion, and persistent war. These conditions coincide with the expansion of the cults of the warrior saints and their increased presence in hagiography.[134]

The representation of arms and armor conveyed an impression of strength and military prowess and signified that the saint was an effective protector.[135] On carved gems, this was further emphasized by clear articulation of musculature, drawn weapons, and poses that suggest readiness or impending action. These iconographic elements suggest that an image of a warrior saint who looked ready to defend must have been considered more effective than one who was

[134] For the development of the cults of each of the major warrior saints, see Walter, *The Warrior Saints in Byzantine Art and Tradition*, 41-144. On the early cults of the warrior saints and their focus upon martyrdom, see White, *Military Saints in Byzantium and Rus,* 13-63. On the iconographic shifts towards militarized warrior saints, see ibid., 85-92; Cotsonis, "Byzantine Lead Seals and the Cult of the Saints," 470-471; Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 63-65; Pencheva *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium,* 85-86.

[135] Parani, "Representing the Reality of Images," 153 and Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite*, 63.

represented without weapons, as a martyr.[136] To this point, it should be noted that on images of the Archangel Michael in other media, such as steatite icons, seals, and mosaics, he is frequently represented in courtly garb, but on carved gemstones he is represented as a warrior on all but a single gem. This suggests that the image of Archangel Michael the Defender was deliberately chosen because it articulated the idea of protection most clearly.

The Archangel Michael

Thirteen gems are carved with an image of the Archangel Michael. Eight date to within the middle Byzantine period and five date to the late Byzantine period. Five are bloodstones, one is a sapphire, two are blue chalcedonies, one is a sardonyx, and three are carved from nephrite. The type of gem used for the carving of the Archangel Michael in the "Morgangabe" cross of Henry II is unknown (no. 7).[137] Several of the gems carved with the image of the Archangel Michael are relatively large and measure around 5 cm. Most are oval in shape.

On the lost gem from the Morgengabe cross of Henry II, the Archangel is represented in courtly attire and holding a *globus cruciger* (no. 7).[138] This mode of representation corresponds closely with the image of the Archangel that appears on middle Byzantine lead seals.[139] On all other gems with the image of the Archangel Michael, however, he is represented as a warrior in

[136] This is typical of depictions of warrior saints across many types of media. See Maguire, *The Icons of their Bodies,* 49-51, 74-78.

[137] The cross disappeared in the early nineteenth century and the gem is known only from a drawing. See Wentzel, "Kameen," 921 and Wentzel, "Das byzantinische Erbe der ottonischen Kaiser - hypothesen über den Brautschatz der Theophano," 34.

[138] Schramm and Mütherich, *Denkmale der deutschen Könige und Kaiser*, 160, Tafel 341. Cited in ibid.

[139] Cotsonis, "Byzantine lead seals and the cult of the saints," 444-445.

order to highlight his protective nature. The bloodstone with the image of the Archangel in the Cabinet des Médailles is also inscribed with the word "The Protector" (no. 46).[140] The iconography of these pieces indicates that the image of Archangel Michael the Defender, and not Archangel Michael of the Heavenly Court, was preferred for gemstone *enkolpia.*

The iconography of the Archangel as a warrior remains relatively consistent from the middle to the late Byzantine periods, although variations can be found in the representation of the armor or the positioning of the body, wings, or weaponry. At its core, the iconography consists of a standing image of the Archangel wearing armor. In his right hand he holds a drawn sword, and in his left hand he holds a scabbard at his waist. On most gems, the figure is accompanied by an abbreviated inscription that reads Ὁ ΑΡΧ(άγγελος) ΜΙΧ(αήλ). On two eleventh-century bloodstones in the Cabinet des Médailles and the Vatopedi Monastery, the Archangel is represented frontally and appears strong, muscular, and almost stocky (nos. 46, 47).[141] He wears the muscled cuirass, an archaizing piece of armor that is most frequently represented on images of warriors from the earlier part of the middle Byzantine period.[142] When represented in sardonyx and blue chalcedony, the figure of the Archangel appears more slender and is turned slightly to his left (nos. 91, 98).[143] On late Byzantine gems, the armor is elaborate and the figure is angled more

[140] Ο ΦΗΛΑΞ, most likely a misspelling of ὁ φύλαξ, which means "the Protector." On this gem see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 280, no. 189.

[141] On the gem in the Cabinet des Médailles, see ibid. On the gem in the Vatopedi monastery see Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 50-51, no. 13.

[142] Grotowski, *Arms and Armour of the Warrior Saints,* 130. Grotowski notes that this piece of armor is found more frequently in the ninth and tenth centuries, but can also be found in representations dating to the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

[143] On the sardonyx of the Archangel Michael in Kassel (no. 91) see Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 92, no. 83. On the chalcedony of the Archangel Michael in Prague (no. 98), see Bauer, "The Reliquary coronation Cross from St. Vitus Treasury," 3.

noticeably to the left. Instead of holding the sheath of the sword at his side, the Archangel holds it behind his body (no. 179).[144]

Alisa Bank has suggested that the image of the Archangel Michael in military garb may be based on a monumental image that, according to Nicetas Choniates, was placed over the main door of Hagia Sophia.[145] The image can be found on works of art from the middle and late Byzantine periods. For example, it appears the bronze doors of the Sanctuary of Monte Gargano in Italy and in a fresco at the Karanlik Church in Göreme, both of which date to the eleventh century.[146] It is represented on an enameled icon from San Marco, which dates to the eleventh or twelfth century, and on a small steatite plaque in the Benaki Museum, which dates to the thirteenth century.[147] It also appears in the pictorial cycles of the Archangel Michael in late Byzantine frescos such as those in the Monastery of Lenovo in Macedonia.[148]

The image of the Archangel Michael in military garb evokes the Archangel's role as the *Archstrategos*, or Chief General, of the Heavenly Army. The Archangel's role as a protector in the physical and spiritual realms is emphasized in many of his stories, including the Apocalypse of John, in which he leads the heavenly battle against the dragon of Satan (Revelations 12:7-9). The two stories of the Archangel Michael that most strongly emphasize his role as a warrior and defender are the legend of the miracle at Chonae and the story of Joshua and the battle of Jericho.

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[144] Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 118-119, no. 40.

[145] Bank, *Prikladnoe Iskusstvo Vizantii*, 131.

[146] These examples are cited by Bank in ibid., 131. On the bronze doors see Margaret Elizabeth Frazer, "Church Doors and the Gates of Paradise: Byzantine Bronze Doors in Italy," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 27 (1973): 158-160.

[147] On the enameled icon see Buckton, *The Treasury of San Marco,* 171, no. 19. On the steatite see Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 186, no. 105.

[148] Smiljka Gabelic, *Cycles of the Archangels in Byzantine Art* (Belgrade: Srpska akademija nauka i umetnosti, 1991), images 39-48 (no page numbers – see image plates).

In the legend of Chonae, a group of pagans became jealous of a Christian community because of the popularity of their sanctuary as a pilgrimage site.[149] They plotted to destroy the sanctuary with a flood by diverting the nearby waters towards the site. The Archangel Michael appeared the moment he was called upon by the sexton and confounded the pagans by diverting the waters into a rock, which opened when he struck his scepter to the ground. Miraculously, a healing spring bubbled forth from the rock. Chonae grew as a pilgrimage destination and the miraculous story itself, which had widespread appeal due to its themes of protection and salvation, was represented in icons and devotional art throughout the middle and late Byzantine periods.[150] In most artistic representations of this story, the Archangel is dressed in a simple tunic or in courtly attire. He is also occasionally represented as he appears on Byzantine gems, wearing armor and holding a drawn sword. An eleventh-century example can be found in a fresco at the Karanlik Church in Göreme. There, the Archangel Michael is represented exactly as he is on glyptics, with his sword drawn in his right hand and a scabbard held in his left hand. An inscription designates the warrior-like Archangel Michael as the Choniates.[151] The title of the Choniates also appears alongside of the image of the Archangel as a warrior on several eleventh-century seals that belonged to military generals.[152] These examples indicate a possibility that the iconographic type represented on Byzantine gem could sometimes refer to the Archangel Michael Choniates.

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[149] On the story of the miracle at Chonae see Smiljka Gabelic, "The Iconography of the Miracle at Chonae. An Unusual Example from Cypress," *Zograf* 20 (1989): 95-96 and Glen Peers, *Subtle Bodies: Representing Angels in Byzantium* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 165-171.

[150] Ibid.

[151] Jolivet-Levy, "Culte et iconographie de l'archange Michel dans l'Orient byzantin," 196.

[152] Cheynet, "Par Saint George, par Saint Michele," 132-133.

The story of the Archangel Michael's intervention in Joshua's battle for Jericho is also relevant to the theme of the Archangel as a warrior. Much like the legend from Chonae, the biblical story of Joshua is about divine protection and victory over adversaries. In the Joshua story, the commander of the Heavenly Army appears to Joshua in an epiphanic vision, sword drawn, and promises God's assistance in battle (Joshua 5: 13-15). While this heavenly figure is unnamed in the biblical text, by the middle Byzantine period he was identified as the Archangel Michael and the story was held as an example of the Archangel's protection of Christians and, especially, of military emperors who enjoyed God's favor. Basil I, who acquired the throne by murdering his predecessor, and Isaac I Komnenos, who secured the throne in a military coup, promoted their right to rule by comparing themselves to Joshua and claiming divine assistance from the Archangel.[153] The decorative program of the tenth-century Pigeon House Church at Cavusin makes a similar claim for the military emperor Nicephoros Phokas. The emperor and his family are represented in fresco on a register underneath a scene of the battle of Jericho. Nearby is a monumental image of Archangel Michael in military garb.[154] These examples demonstrate that the story of the Archangel Michael's participation in the battle of Jericho had a special appeal for military leaders, especially those who needed to legitimize a controversial victory.

Since several stories were closely associated with the theme of the Archangel Michael as a warrior, it is likely that the representation of the Archangel on carved gemstones referred broadly to his protective nature and did not necessarily reference one particular story or legend. The fact that the inscription on the gem in the Cabinet des Médailles names the Archangel as "The

[153] Jolivet-Levy, "Culte et iconographie de l'archange Michel dans l'Orient byzantin," 193; Cheynet, "Par Saint George, par Saint Michele," 132-133; Martin-Hisard, "Le culte de l'archange Michel dans l'empire byzantin," 364-368.

[154] Jolivet-Levy, "Culte et iconographie de l'archange Michel dans l'orient byzantin," 194.

Protector" and does not reference a specific legend seems to support this idea. It should also be noted that the Archangel was considered the guardian of souls at the time of death.[155] His association with salvation and protection extended to healing as well. The Archangel's springs at Chonae and elsewhere in Asia Minor gave forth healing waters, and miraculous healings took place at the Archangel's shrines. The healing was usually wrought by evoking his holy presence or from oil that emerged from his icon.[156] Since the Archangel was broadly associated with divine aid, protection, healing, and miracle working, it is likely that gemstone *enkolpia* with his image could evoke any or all of his attributes, as needed by the supplicant.

The question of who may have owned gemstone *enkolpia* with the Archangel's image is difficult to answer because of the widespread appeal of the Archangel Michael and his cult. Studies have demonstrated that the Archangel could be called upon at all levels of society for help in a range of situations, from everyday challenges and illnesses to crises such as invasion, siege, and plague. The Archangel was also venerated as a name saint by those with the name Michael.[157] The Archangel's popularity suggests that gems with his image could have belonged to almost anyone.

It may be possible, however, to identify some types of individuals who were more likely to own a gem with the image of the Archangel. The Archangel is represented as a warrior on lead seals that belonged to military generals in the eleventh century.[158] This suggests that some of the

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[155] Ibid., 198.

[156] Peers, *Subtle Bodies*, 154-156; Martin-Hisard, "Le culte de l'archange Michel dans l'empire byzantin," 358-359.

[157] Martin-Hisard, "Le culte de l'archange Michel dans l'empire byzantin," 353-361; Jolivet-Levy, "Culte et iconographie de l'archange Michel dans l'orient byzantin," 196-198.

[158] Cheynet, "Par Saint George, par Saint Michele," 132-133.

gems may have been owned by individuals with a military connection. The image also appears on coins for the first time during the reign of Isaac II Angelos, a military emperor who ruled in the last quarter of the twelfth century.[159] The members of the imperial Angelos family positioned themselves as especially close to the angels because of their family name.[160] Members of this family are especially likely to own a gemstone *enkolpion* with the Archangel's image

Military Saints

Twenty-nine gems are carved with an image of a warrior saint. Images of warrior saints were carved on a variety of different types of gemstones including bloodstone, red jasper, sapphire, blue chalcedony, amethyst, chrysoprase, nephrite, serpentine, sardonyx, and agate. This indicates that warrior saints were not strictly associated with one type of gemstone, although ten of the carvings are of bloodstone or red jasper. When these gems were selected for carving, they may have been intended to evoke the blood shed by martyrdom and battle. Most of the gems with the image of warrior saints measure close to the average size of 3.7 cm, and most are oval in shape.

Although there are dozens of Byzantine warrior saints, only five are represented on Byzantine gems. St. Niketas the Goth appears only once, on a bloodstone with the Crucifixion in

[159] Grierson and Bellinger, *Catalogue of Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection,* vol. 4, no. 1, 220. See also the coin of the military emperor Isaac I Komnenos, in which the emperor is represented in a manner that is clearly drawn from the image of the Archangel Michael the Defender. On the iconography of the coin and its relationship with the iconography of the Archangel see Cheynet, "Par Saint George, par Saint Michele," 132.

[160] Maguire, "The Heavenly Court," 252.

the Vatican (no. 144).[161] He is represented on the reverse, standing next to the Virgin. The four other warrior saints that appear on Byzantine gems are St. George, St. Demetrios, St. Theodore Tiron, and St. Theodore Stratelates. These four saints are among the six who have been identified in scholarship as the major saints that held the highest status among warrior saints in Byzantium.[162] The other two within this group of major warrior saints are St. Prokopios and St. Merkourios, but they do not appear on the gems that were assembled for this dissertation.

On carved gemstones, warrior saints are represented as martyrs on only three gems. They are the amethyst of St. Theodore in the Victoria and Albert Museum, the amethyst with St. George and St. Demetrios in the Museum of London, and the blue chalcedony with the same saints in the Hermitage (nos. 8, 9, 31).[163] The gems with the image of St. George and St. Demetrios date to the tenth century. On these two gems, the representation of the saints as martyrs instead of as warriors can be explained by the fact that martyred soldier saints are not consistently represented in military attire until the early eleventh century.[164]

The representation of St. Theodore Stratelates as a martyr on the amethyst in the Victoria and Albert museum is unusual (no. 31).[165] The inscription identifies the figure as St. Theodore

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[161] Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen in den Sammlungen Italiens," 271.

[162] On the major warrior saints see Walter, *The Warrior Saint in Byzantine Art and Tradition,* 41-43.

[163] On the gem in the Hermitage see. Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 120, no. 630. On the gem in the Museum of London see Forsyth, *The Cheapside Hoard: London's Lost Jewels*, 179. To my knowledge, the amethyst of St. Theodore in the Victoria and Albert Museum is unpublished, outside of the online catalogue on the museum website.

[164] Cotsonis, "Byzantine Lead Seals and the Cult of the Saints," 470-471; White, *Military Saints in Byzantium and Rus,* 85-92; Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 63-65; Pencheva *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium,* 85-86.

[165] According to the curator's file at the Victoria and Albert Museum, the amethyst was mounted on a ciborium. It was likely cut into its octagonal shape for its mounting on the ciborium, as gems were not cut into octagonal shapes in Byzantium.

Stratelates, but St. Theodore Stratelates is never represented as a martyr. His cult did not develop until the late ninth century, and when it did, the saint emerged immediately as a military general. It is thought that his cult developed out of that of St. Theodore Tiron, a military recruit, and that the Stratelates' higher rank had a special appeal for elites.[166] Since martyrdom was never a significant aspect of St. Theodore Stratelates' cult and iconography, his representation as a martyr on the Victoria and Albert amethyst is unusual. It is possible that the inscription identifying the saint as Theodore Stratelates was added later. Otherwise, Ioli Kalavrezou's theory regarding the depiction of warrior saints as martyrs on steatites may apply. Kalavrezou noted that when warrior saints were represented as martyrs on steatites, they appeared as part of a larger visual program that conveyed a theological or eschatological concept, such as the *hetoimasia*. Since these types of images do not center around protection or other earthly matters, the saints were represented as martyrs and not as warriors.[167] Following this line of thinking, it could be suggested that the owner of the Victoria and Albert amethyst had St. Theodore Stratelates as his patron saint and hoped that the saint would help him in spiritual matters such as in obtaining salvation.

On a bloodstone in the Vatican, which dates to the late tenth or early eleventh century, St. Demetrios is represented in courtly dress (no. 16).[168] His costume includes the *tablion*, an ornamental panel that was worn over the breast. This mode of representation was typical of early images of St. Demetrios, including the seventh-century mosaics of the Church of St. Demetrios in

[166] On the prestige of St. Theodore Stratelates and his appeal for Byzantine elites, see White, *Military Saints in Byzantium and Rus,* 74. On the iconography of St. Theodore Stratelates, see Cotsnois "Byzantine Lead Seals and the Cult of the Saints," 451 and Walter, *The Warrior Saint in Byzantine Art and Tradition*, 60-66.

[167] Walter, *The Warrior Saint in Byzantine Art and Tradition,* 64.

[168] Righetti, "Le opere di Glittica dei Musei Annessi alla Biblioteca Vaticana," 332, table V, no. 2.

Thessaloniki. The last of the major warrior saints to be militarized, St. Demetrios was still occasionally represented in courtly attire throughout the middle Byzantine period.[169]

On the remaining gems, the warrior saint is depicted in military attire that includes armor, weaponry, and shields. There is some variation in the elements of armor, which may be attributed to changes that occur in the technology of Byzantine armor over time. New elements such as scaled armor and chain armor were gradually introduced over the middle Byzantine period, as were shields in new shapes and sizes. In the late Byzantine period, armor and weaponry became more elaborate.[170] It should be noted that the carving of small details of armor was difficult to achieve when working in semi-precious stone. Perhaps for this reason, the muscled cuirass and quilted armor are represented most frequently for the warrior saints that appear on carved gems. The muscled cuirass can be formed through simple polishing and quilted armor can be represented with linear incisions. The most important function of the arms and armor that appear on carved gemstones was to convey the idea of protection.

Most Byzantine gems with the image of a warrior saint display a single figure. Warrior saints are also represented alone on seals and steatites, but on ivories, painted icons, manuscript illumination, and monumental painting they are usually represented in groups of two or more, often as part of a larger visual program. It has been argued that the tendency to depict warrior

[169] Unlike St. George and St. Theodore Tiron, who were always designated as soldiers in the hagiography, St. Demetrios does not have a military background. He was venerated as the protector of the city of Thessaloniki and later for the miracles worked by the myrrh that emerged from his tomb. It was only in the middle Byzantine period that his protective nature led to his transformation into a warrior saint. For the iconography of St. Demetrios on seals see Cotsonis, "Byzantine Lead Seals and the Cult of the Saints," 462-465. For the evolution of his cult and his changing role as a warrior saint see Walter, *The Warrior Saint in Byzantine Art and Tradition,* 73-80.

[170] Grotowski, *Arms and Armour of the Warrior Saints,* 125-312. Parani, *Representing the Reality of Images,* 101-158.

saints in groups was intended convey the idea of a military cohort.[171] On carved gemstones, the limitations of size, format, and the hardness of the material discouraged multi-figure compositions. The representation of a single figure was also better suited to their function as *enkolpia*, which typically displayed an image of a single patron saint.

The iconography of warrior saints on Byzantine gemstones sometimes corresponds to that of seals. This is expected given their similarities in format and size. When a military saint is represented as a bust on a lead seal, he usually holds a spear diagonally across his body so that it rests on one shoulder. In his left hand he holds a shield, which is represented in profile so that its curve follows the edge of the circular composition.[172] When represented as a standing figure on seals, warrior saints usually hold a spear.[173] Similar imagery can be found on carved gemstones, such as the bloodstone with the image of St. Theodore in the Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel (no. 124) and the gray agate with the image of St. George in the Kremlin Museum (no. 87).[174]

On most gems, however, the figure is represented in bust with a sword held over his right shoulder and a shield held in his left hand. The placement of the sword calls to mind the iconography of the Archangel Michael that appears on carved gemstones. This mode of representation may have been preferred because the raised sword suggests a sense of readiness in a way that a spear held over the shoulder does not. In fact, the drawn sword can be read as

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[171] Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images,* 153; Monica White, *Military Saints in Byzantium and Rus*, 84. On warrior saints represented individually on steatites see Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 63. On seals, there are many examples. See Nesbitt and Oikonomides, *Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks,* vol. 1, nos. 1.14 and 1.18.

[172] There are many examples of this iconography on lead seals. See for example Nesbitt and Oikonomides, *Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks*, vol. 2, no. 54.1.

[173] Many examples exist. See ibid., vol. 1, no. 114.

[174] On the bloodstone in Kassel, see. Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 90-91, no. 86. On the agate in the Kremlin, see Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 123, no. 638.

aggressive. This can be inferred from the outrage provoked by Emperor Isaac I Komnenos' release of a solidus upon which he was represented with a drawn sword. The controversy is thought to have centered upon the image's impiety, since it suggested that the emperor won the throne through force and not through God's appointment.[175] The aggression conveyed by the drawn sword may have also contributed to the controversy that surrounded the image. In the same way, the representation of the drawn sword on images of warrior saints would have been seen as aggressive and intimidating. It was therefore an ideal way to represent one's personal protector on an *enkolpion.* The same iconography also appears on small steatite *enkolpia*.[176]

Although most gems carved with the image of warrior saints represent a single figure, there are five bloodstones that are double-sided. One is the Crucifixion bloodstone in the Vatican with the image of St. Niketas the Goth and the Virgin on the reverse (no. 144).[177] The bloodstone of the Archangel Michael in the Walters Art Gallery has an image of St. Demetrios on the reverse (no. 129).[178] The bloodstone of Alexios V Doukas in the Cini has an image of St. John the Baptist on the obverse and St. George on the Reverse (no. 118).[179] A bloodstone in the State Historical Museum of Kiev pairs St. Theodore Tiron and St. Theodore Stratelates on its two sides. It is not clear which side is the obverse and which is the reverse no. (132).[180] Finally, St. Theodore is

[175] On the reaction of the populace to the coin of Isaac I Komnenos, see Charles M. Brand and Anthony Cutler, "Isaac I Komnenos," In *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (Oxford University Press, 1991), accessed January 15, 2015, http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195046526.001.0001/acref-9780195046526-e-2512.

[176] For the steatite pendants see Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 212-215, nos. 138, 142, and 143.

[177] Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen in den Sammlungen Italiens," 271.

[178] Miner, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art,* 114, no. 556.

[179] Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 10-12, nos. 2 and 3.

[180] Putzko, "Die zweiseitige Kamee in der Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore," 177-179, no. 4 a, b.

represented on the reverse of a bloodstone with an image of St. John the Baptist in the Stuttgart Landesmuseum (no. 133).[181] It is interesting to note that on two of the five double-sided gems with warrior saints, the warrior saint is paired with St. John the Baptist. Their pairing may reflect the patron's need for saints who could assist in different contexts, with the warrior saint acting as a protector and the Baptist functioning as the intercessor.

Three gems are carved with the image of Christ blessing warrior saints (nos. 141, 142, 194).[182] In this image, a bust of Christ floats above the warrior saints and places his hands above their heads in blessing. In some variations of this image, Christ places crowns upon the saints' heads. The image appears on seals and steatite carvings from the eleventh and twelfth centuries.[183] Similar iconography can be found in imperial art. For example, in an imperial portrait of Emperor Nikephoros III Botaniates and Maria of Alania in the *Homilies of John Chrysostom,* Christ is represented hovering above the ruling couple and placing crowns upon their heads *(BN Coislin 79 fol. 2v)*.[184] The sardonyx in the Cabinet des Médailles may be described as an example of this iconographic theme as it appears on carved gems (no. 142).[185] This large

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[181] Wentzel, "Kameen," 920.

[182] According to Alisa Bank, a jasper on Mt. Athos is carved with an identical iconographic theme has been described by Kondakov and dated to the eleventh or twelfth century but published without an image. It is included in this study because it has been described by Bank. On this gem See Bank, *Prikladnoe Iskusstvo Vizantii,* 135. On the gem with this image in the Cabinet des Médailles see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance*, 283, no. 193. On the gem with this image in the Kremlin see Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 3, 162, no. 1017.

[183] On the steatites see Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 111-114, 118, 174, and 178, nos. 21, 23, 28, 90, and 100. For an example of the image on a lead seal see Nesbitt and Oikonomides, *Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks,* vol. 1, 110, no 42.4.

[184] This imperial portrait dates to the eleventh century. See Maguire, "Style and Ideology in Byzantine Imperial Art," 221, no. 7.

[185] Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 282-283, no. 193.

sardonyx measures 4.9 cm in height and is skillfully carved from a stone with three layers. St. George and St. Demetrios are represented standing side by side in active poses. St. George, on the left, holds his sword over his right shoulder. St. Demetrios, on the right, turns toward St. George and holds a long spear. Christ, represented in bust, hovers over them with his hands placed above their heads in blessing. This gem dates to the late twelfth century.

This section on gems carved with images of warrior saints may be concluded by a discussion of their ownership. In her study on steatites, Ioli Kalavrezou argued against Alisa Bank's suggestion that icons of warrior saints in schiste and steatite were owned by soldiers. She proposed that a soldier might be able to afford only a small steatite pendant.[186] Following this line of thinking, it can be suggested that some of the jasper carvings that display a rough, abbreviated carving style, such as those in Kiev, may have been owned by soldiers (nos. 131, 132).[187] Soldiers may have also owned *enkolpia* with images of warrior saints that were made from less expensive materials, such as glass paste.[188] The more skillfully carved pieces and, certainly, those of amethyst and sapphire, would have belonged to elite members of society. These individuals could have included emperors and high-ranking military officials, as well as aristocrats who had chosen warrior saint as their personal protectors.

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[186] Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite*, 67. On Alisa Bank's suggestion that stone icons were owned by solders see Bank, *Byzantine Art in the Collection of Soviet Museums*, 20.

[187] Popovich, "An examination of the Chilandar cameos," 40, no. 36; Putzko, "Die zweiseitige Kamee in der Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore," 177-179, no. 4 a, b.

[188] See, for example, the glass paste cameo of St. Demetrios in the British Museum that very closely resembles the bloodstone of St. George, also in the British Museum, in David Buckton, "The Mass-Produced Byzantine Saint," in *Studies Supplementary to Sobornost (Eastern Churches Review)*, 5th ed., ed. Sergei Hackel (London: Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius, 1981), 188-189, no. 8c.

The elites of society were likely to own gemstone *enkolpia* with images of warrior saints because the cults of the warrior saints developed out of imperial patronage.[189] The Macedonian emperors promoted the military aspect of the cults of martyred soldiers in order to position them as imperial protectors and holy allies. The military treatises penned by emperors Constantine VII Porphyrogennitos and Nikephoros II Phokas incorporate prayers and rituals that were intended to propitiate Christ and the warrior saints for divine assistance in battle. An inscription in the Psalter of Emperor Basil II refers to the warrior saints as his "allies and friends."[190] Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos attributed his own success in battle to St. George, and commissioned a church in the saint's honor.[191] The Komnenian emperors also patronized the cults of the warrior saints.[192] Emperors, generals, and aristocrats who chose warrior saints as the subjects of their gemstone *enkolpia* ultimately did so, however, because they hoped that the warrior saint would be effective as a personal protector.

[189] Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 67.

[190] Ibid., White, *Military Saints in Byzantium and Rus,* 32-63; Walter, *The Warrior Saints in Byzantine Art and Tradition,* 277-278.

[191] Cheynet, "Par Saint George, par Saint Michele," 122.

[192] White, *Military Saints in Byzantium and Rus,* 32-63.

Chapter Eight: Subject Matter and Iconography Part II

This chapter is dedicated the subject matter and iconography of gem carved with images of bishop saints, apostles, female saints, narrative scenes, and the prophet Daniel, who is the only Old Testament prophet that is represented on Byzantine carved gemstones. The holy figures that are discussed in this chapter are of a lower rank in the Byzantine hierarchy of saints than those discussed in the previous chapter, and with the exception of the prophet Daniel, they appear relatively infrequently on the Byzantine carved gemstones. The gems with the image of the prophet Daniel will be discussed first, followed by those with images of the apostles, then those that represent bishops, and then those that represent female saints. The gems that display narrative scenes will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

The Prophet Daniel

Of all of holy figures that are represented on Byzantine carved gemstones, Daniel's presence is the most surprising, not least of all for the frequency with which he is represented. Appearing on a total of thirteen gems, Daniel is represented more often than any holy figure other than Christ and the Virgin. He even surpasses the Archangel Michael, St. John the Baptist, and St. George. Daniel's popularity as a subject on Byzantine gems is unexpected given that he hails from the Old Testament and does not have an exclusively Christian pedigree. Old Testament prophets do not appear frequently on Byzantine devotional art; instead, images of Christ, the Virgin, saints, and Christian narrative scenes are preferred. I know of no ivory icons with an image of Daniel or any Old Testament figure that post-date the seventh century. Among

micromosaic icons, only one with the image of Daniel is known.[1] The prophet Daniel is represented on steatites, but never on large icon plaques. Interestingly, on steatites he is only represented on small pendants that are closely related in form and function to carved gemstones.[2] It can be concluded, therefore, that Daniel's presence on Byzantine devotional art centered mostly upon stone *enkolpia.*

One of the primary reasons that Daniel was associated with stone concerns his prophecy regarding the stone that was cut from the mountain without human hands.[3] This prophecy comes from Daniel's interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar's dream in the second chapter of the Book of Daniel. Nebuchadnezzar dreamed that a great statue constructed of gold, iron, and bronze was smashed and destroyed by a great stone cut from a mountain "not by human hands" (Daniel 2:34). Daniel interpreted the stone as a kingdom that would destroy all others and rule eternally. The biblical text reads, "And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall this kingdom be left to another people. It shall crush all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever; just as you saw that a stone was cut from the mountain not by hands, and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. The great God has informed the king what shall be hereafter. The dream is certain, and its interpretation trustworthy."[4]

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[1] In 1879 a micromosaic icon with an image of the "Prophet Saint Daniel" was recorded in the inventory of San Marco, but its current whereabouts are unknown. See Ryder, *Micromosaic Icons of the Late Byzantine Period*, 290.

[2] Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite*, 187-188, 215, 242-246, nos. 107, 145, A-21, and. A-53; Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* no. 27.

[3] Ioli Kalavrezou proved a link between the material of steatite and Daniel's metaphor about stones. See Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite*, 82.

[4] Daniel 2:44-45. Text from Michael D. Coogan, "Daniel." In The New Oxford Annotated Bible. Oxford Biblical Studies Online, accessed March 23, 2015, http://www.oxfordbiblicalstudies.com/article/book/obso-9780195288803/obso-9780195288803-div1-872.

Daniel's vision of the stone cut from the mountain is not represented frequently in art, but it is sometimes depicted in the margins of illuminated psalters.[5] For example, it is represented in the Bristol Psalter, which dates to the eleventh century (C18).[6] In the illustration, the prophet Daniel is represented lying on his bed in order to indicate that he received his vision in a dream. King David, the author of the Psalms, stands beside him. Before them rises a mountain with a portion cut out of the left side. A rock, which has the same shape as the portion cut out of the mountain, falls away. Falling pebbles and red flashes of light at the site of the cut denote the powerful force of the miraculous event. Daniel's association with the prophecy of the rock cut from the mountain is also occasionally illustrated on icons. For example, an image of Daniel holding a miniature mountain appears on a post-Byzantine icon that dates to around the year 1500. Daniel is represented among other Old Testament prophets, all of whom are holding scrolls as well as an identifying attribute that relates to their prophecy.[7]

The Church Fathers interpreted Daniel's metaphor of the stone cut from the mountain as a prophecy of the Incarnation. According to this metaphor, the mountain represented the Virgin and the stone that was miraculously cut from it represented Christ, who came into the world through the Incarnation.[8] For example, in his sermon on the Baptism of Christ, Gregory of

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[5] Catherine Brown Tkacz et. al., "Daniel," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, (Oxford University Press, 1991), accessed March 23, 2015, http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195046526.001.0001/acref-9780195046526-e-1354.

[6] "Add MS 40731," *British Library Digitized Manuscripts,* accessed November 6, 2014, http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add_MS_40731.

[7] The scroll reads, "You are the mountain. From you a stone was cut." (Cὺ εἶ τὸ ὄρος. ἐκ σοῦ λίθος ἐτμήθη.) For image, inscription, and translation see Andreas Rhoby, "Epigramme auf Ikonen," in Hörandner, Paul, and Rhoby, *Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung*, 109, no. IK39.

[8] Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 82.

Nyssa wrote, "For what is the stone that is laid but Christ Himself? For of Him Isaiah says, 'And I will lay in the foundations of Sion a costly stone, precious elect:' and Daniel likewise, 'A stone was cut out without hands,' that is, Christ was born without a man. For as it is a new and marvelous thing that a stone should be cut out of the rock without a hewer or stone-cutting tools, so it is a thing beyond all wonder that an offspring should appear from an unwedded Virgin."[9] A similar idea is expressed in the commentary on Daniel written by Theodoret of Cyrus, a bishop and theologian who lived in the fifth century. Theodoret wrote, "So we learn from the Old and New Testament that our Lord Jesus was called *stone*: it was cut from the mountain without hands being used, being born of a virgin independently of marital intercourse."[10] The exegetical interpretation of Daniel's vision of the rock cut from the mountain as a metaphor of the Incarnation is illustrated on twelfth-century icon of the Virgin Kykkotissa on Mt. Sinai. The image of the Virgin and Child enthroned in the center of the icon is surrounded by small images of the prophets, all of whom hold scrolls inscribed with words from their own prophecies that were thought to foreshadow the Incarnation of Christ. Daniel's scroll contains a reference to the rock that was cut from the mountain. The prophecy is illustrated with a miniature mountain that is pictured beside him.[11]

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[9] Gregory of Nyssa, "On the Baptism of Christ," in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers. Second Series*, *Gregory of Nyssa, Dogmatic Treatises*, vol. 5, ed. and trans. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (New York, NY: Cosimo Classics, 1994, reprint 2007), 521.

[10] Theodoret, *Commentary on Daniel*, trans. Robert C. Hill (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), 53.

[11] Eugen J. Pentiuc, *The Old Testament in Eastern Orthodox Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 312-313.

In her study on steatites, Ioli Kalavrezou found that the metaphor of Christ as the rock that was cut from the mountain "not with human hands" was connected to the material of stone on carved objects such as steatite carvings of Christ and the Virgin. The metaphor is referenced, for example, on steatite paten on Mt. Athos with the image of the Virgin and Christ surrounded by prophets, including the prophet Daniel. The inscription on Daniel's open scroll is from his prophecy regarding the stone cut from the mountain, which in this case serves as a double metaphor relating to both the Incarnation and to the stone material of the object itself.[12] The link between the prophet Daniel and the material of stone that has been demonstrated in steatites can contextualize his popularity as a subject on carved gemstones. The representation of the prophet who had an important vision about stone within the material of stone is the sort of poetic reasoning that appears often in ekphrastic poems written for works of art and is characteristic of the Byzantine practice of connecting metaphors with materials. Daniel's vision of the stone cut from the mountain should therefore be considered one of the main reasons that he is represented frequently on carved gemstones.

This explanation, however, does not fully take into the account the importance of Daniel as a holy figure in Christianity or his reception in Byzantium. Therefore, it is also necessary to examine the significance of the prophet Daniel in Byzantine culture. The prophet Daniel was one of the major prophets of the Old Testament. He is the only prophet commemorated in the Metaphrastic Menologion. He was celebrated in the liturgy along with the Three Holy Children in Hagia Sophia.[13] Daniel's relics were also located in Constantinople. His tomb was housed

[12] Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 82.

[13] Daniel is commemorated along with the Three Youths who were thrown into the fiery furnace. See Lowden, *Illuminated Prophet Books,* 78; Majeska, "A Medallion of the Prophet Daniel in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection," 363n13; Velimirović, "Liturgical Drama in Byzantium and Russia," 352-359.

within the Church of St. Romanos and visited regularly by pilgrims. Eventually, Daniel's tomb became so popular as a pilgrimage site that the church of St. Romanos became known as the Church of St. Daniel. Several sources relate that pilgrims who visited the tomb received a "seal" of the prophet Daniel. The material of the seal is not known, but it is possible that its matrix was a carved gemstone.[14] The Russian pilgrim Anthony of Novgorod wrote that at Hagia Sophia, the matrix for the seals given to pilgrims was a gemstone carved with the image of Christ. The gem was set into the center of a golden paten that had been donated to the Church of Hagia Sophia by the Russian princess Olga in the tenth century.[15]

Daniel's importance in Byzantium stems from the positive reception of the narratives set forth in the biblical Book of Daniel. The text relays riveting stories about Daniel's dangerous life in the Babylonian court, his ability to interpret dreams, and his apocalyptic prophecy. The stories about Daniel and the lions, in which on two occasions God saved Daniel from death in the lion's den, were amongst the best-known narratives (Daniel 6:16-23 and Daniel 14:28-42). In a related story, Daniel's companions, the Three Holy Children, were thrown into a furnace because they refused to worship the king's graven idol (Daniel 3: 8-30). They prayed and worshipped God throughout their ordeal and, like Daniel, they were also saved. Another important story concerns Daniel's close yet tense relationship with the Babylonian ruler, King Nebuchadnezzar, and his gift of dream interpretation (Daniel 2:1-49; Daniel 4:1-37). The king was disturbed by an enigmatic dream and none of his wise men or sorcerers could explain its meaning. With the help of God, only Daniel was able to interpret the dream. The dream was a prophecy that the

[14] Majeska, *Russian Travelers to Constantinople in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, 327-329 and Majeska, "A Medallion of the Prophet Daniel," 361-366.

[15] Ehrhard, "Le livre du pelerin, d'Antoine de Novgorod," 49. The use of the gem in the paten of princess Olga as a seal matrix is also discussed in Majeska, "A Medallion of the Prophet Daniel," 364.

Babylonian kingdom would be surpassed by several other kingdoms in the future. These kingdoms would fall and be surpassed by one last kingdom, which would never be destroyed. Daniel's prophetic ability is developed further when God grants him terrifying apocalyptic visions (Daniel 7:1-28; Daniel 8:1-27; Daniel 9:20-27; Daniel 10: 1-20). The Greek Septuagint also includes three additional chapters in Daniel that are not present in the Hebrew text. The stories, called Bel and the Dragon, Suzannah and the Elders, and the Song of the Three Holy Children, center upon salvation and God's favor towards the faithful and the righteous.[16]

The theme of salvation through faith runs through the entire Book of Daniel. Daniel finds himself in danger again and again but, after turning to God in prayer, he is saved. The best-known stories that illustrate Daniel's salvation through faith are the stories of Daniel and the lions. The theme, however, also underlies the story of King Nebuchadnezzar's dreams since Daniel and his companions would have faced death had God not granted Daniel the ability to interpret the dream. These stories of salvation through faith made the prophet Daniel a figure to whom the Christian Byzantines could relate.

Daniel's stories were highly engaging and had a broad appeal, much like the *vitae* of popular Christian saints. They bestow upon Daniel multiple identities that include prophet, dream interpreter, courtier, judge, tamer of beasts, attacker of heresy, and faithful servant of God. As such, he was a relevant figure to groups as disparate as clerics, monastics, emperors interested in future events, courtiers, and even those interested in magic and dream interpretation. The Church Fathers John Chrysostom, John of Damascus, Eusebius of Caesarea, and Cyril of

[16] On the three additional chapters in the Greek Septuagent version of Daniel, see "Daniel, Book of" in *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, eds. F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone (Oxford University Press, 2005), accessed March 23, 2015, http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780192802903.001.0001/acref-9780192802903-e-1889.

Alexandria regarded Daniel as an Old Testament prophet who saw both the Son and the Ancient of Days with his own eyes. Their interpretations of Daniel's vision varied, especially regarding the identity of the Ancient of Days, but it deserves noting that Eusebius of Caesarea and Cyril of Alexandria saw it as a foreshadowing of Christ's Incarnation.[17] In the monastic sphere, Basil of Caesarea upheld Daniel as a model for monks due to his asceticism and unwavering devotion to God, while Theodore of Studion taught his followers to emulate Daniel's orant pose when praying.[18] Prophetic apocalyptic texts and books on dream interpretation were penned in Daniel's name and used by emperors and other elites of the Byzantine court.[19]

Daniel's multivalent identity and widespread appeal is evident from this poem that was composed in his honor. It appears in an illuminated prophet book in Florence that has been dated to the tenth century.[20]

> The providence of God is indescribable in words
> How he is accustomed to crown those who believe in him
> With all good things at their death.
> Thus Daniel, the delight of prophets,
> Having fled the sword of the Persian armies, and having been
> Dragged off as a prisoner to a foreign land,
> Exchanged his country but discovered God once again.
> First of all he was a friend of rulers,
> Then he knew the coming end of ages,
> Curbing wild beasts, foreseeing even in dreams,
> Having well exchanged the earthly for heavenly things

[17] Gretchen Kraehling McKay, "The Eastern Christian Exegetical Tradition of Daniel's Vision of the Ancient of Days," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 7.1 (1999): 139-161, esp. 157-161.

[18] In *Longer Rules* Basil of Caeserea upheld Daniel's asceticism in the court of Nebuchadnezzar and his unwavering devotion to God as an example for monks. See Derek Krueger, "The Old Testament and Monasticism" in *The Old Testament in Byzantium*, ed. Paul Magdalino and Robert S. Nelson (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2010), 210-212. On Theodore of Studion and prayer see Pitarakis, *Les croix-reliquaires pectorales byzantines en bronze*, 84.

[19] On the apocalypse texts attributed to Daniel see Paul Julius Alexander and Dorothy F. de Abrahamse, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 51-122. On the dreambooks attributed to Daniel see Oberhelman, *Dreambooks in Byzantium,* 59-116.

[20] Lowden, *Illuminated Prophet Books,* 19.

He left behind sayings, of which the expressions are here."

The poem celebrates Daniel's marvelous ability to tame wild beasts, interpret dreams, and prophesize. It also calls attention to Daniel's success at court calling him a "friend of rulers." All of these good things, the poem relates, are given to Daniel because of his faith in God.

Daniel's significance in Byzantine society is reflected by the fact that he is represented on thirteen carved gemstones. Eight are sardonyxes (nos. 93, 95, 97, 96, 199, 114, 92, 94).[21] The other five gems with the representation of Daniel are carved from bloodstone, red jasper, and green jasper (nos. 189, 125, 159, 158, 157).[22] All of the gems carved with the image of Daniel are small in size with the largest, a sardonyx in the Hermitage Museum, measuring 4 cm in height. Most are oval in shape.

The fact that over half of the gems carved with the image of Daniel are sardonyxes requires further comment. The apparent association of sardonyx with the figure of Daniel cannot

[21] Two of these sardonyxes are located in the Hermitage. One was located in the Sacristy of the Patriarch in Moscow, but it is now lost. The others in the British Museum, Cividale, the Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel, the Vatopedi Monastery, and the Galleria Sabauda in Turin. On the sardonyx carvings in the Hermitage see Bank, "Vier byzantinisierende Kameen aus der Ermitage," 14-15, nos. 3 and 5. On the lost gem in the Sacristy of the Patriarch in Moscow, see du Mély, "Le trésor de la Sacristie des patriarches de Moscou," 208, no. 3. On the sardonyx of Daniel in the British Museum see Williamson, "Daniel between the lions," 37-39. On the sardonyx of Daniel in Cividale, see Menis, "Un malnoto cammeo cividalese con Daniele fra i leoni vestito alla persima," 187. On the sardonyx of Daniel in Kassel, see Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 92-93, no. 88. On the sardonyx of Daniel in the Vatopedi Monastery see Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 52-53, no. 13. On the sardonyx of Daniel in Turin, see Castagnoli, *Dagli ori antichi agli anni Venti,* 229, no. 42.

[22] These are located in Zagorsk, the Correr Museum, the Cabinet des Médailles, and the Benaki Museum. The gem that was last housed in the Cathedral of the Dormition in Moscow is now lost. On the gem in Zagorsk, see Jurgenson, "Zur Frage des Charakters der byzantinischen Plastik während der palaiologenzeit," 271-272. On the bloodstone in the Correr Museum, see Wentzel, "Kameen," 922. On the gem in the Cabinet des Médailles, see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 348, no. 330. On the red jasper in the Benaki Museum see Williamson, "Daniel between the lions," 38, no. 3. On the lost gem from the Cathedral of the Dormition in Moscow, see Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 38.

be explained by exegetical literature. Daniel is associated with a specific stone in only one text, a treatise on gemstones written by Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis, in the fourth century. The stone in question is the *ligurion*, which has not been identified with a modern stone with certainty.[23] The preference for sardonyx for carvings of Daniel cannot be explained by dating, since the sardonyxes are dated across the span of several centuries. One possible explanation is that sardonyx was sometimes chosen for aesthetic reasons, as some with the image of Daniel between the lions are cut so that the fur of the lions has golden highlights. It is also possible that sardonyx was chosen for its medicinal properties. Michael Psellos wrote that the 'monochrome" type of sardonyx could prevent miscarriage, while the "polychrome" type could cure melancholy.[24] These properties are relevant to Daniel's reputation as a protector of women and the mind, which will be discussed shortly. It is also possible that the sardonyx stone was frequently chosen simply because it was more affordable than other gemstones.

The gemstones with the image of the prophet Daniel can iconographically be divided into two groups based upon their iconographic themes. The first group is made up of seven gems carved with the image of Daniel between the lions, while the second group is made up gems that depict Daniel holding a scroll or a book. In the symmetrical composition of Daniel between the lions, Daniel is represented standing frontally in an orant pose. He wears a Persian costume

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[23] The *ligurion* is the seventh stone in the breastplate of the High Priest of Israel. In the Georgian version of *De Gemmis*, Epiphanius writes that the *ligurion* is a yellowish-red color and identifies it with hyacinth. Later in the text, he wrote that the stone was the color of the tail of a cow and that it gave off a greenish light. Epiphanius' entry on the *ligurion* incorporates a discussion of the Three Holy Children, who were not burnt because they stood on the hyacinth stone (which was identified with the *ligurion*), as well as a discussion of Daniel's role in saving Susannah from the Elders. See Epiphanius, *Epiphanius de gemmis: the Old Georgian Version and the Fragments of the Armenian version*, trans. Robert P. Blake, and Henri de Vis, (London: Christophers, 1934), 140-148 (the Georgian version) and 225-231 (the Armenian version); Michael C. Stone, "An Armenian Epitome of Epiphanius's "De Gemmis," *Harvard Theological Review* 82.4 (1989): 468.

[24] Barry Baldwin, "Michael Psellus on the Properties of Stones," *Byzantinislavakia* 56 (1995): 399.

including trousers, a short tunic, a cape, and a Phrygian cap. He is framed on either side by two lions, and identified by an inscription in which the word "prophet" is represented in a monogram form. Although the iconography is mostly the same on all seven gems, small variations can be identified. For example, the red jasper in the Benaki Museum includes the representation of the lion's den itself (no. 158). The other iconographic variations can be attributed to differences in carving style. On three of the sardonyxes the figure of Daniel is stocky, the relief is flat, and the lions are rendered in profile in an abstracted, pattern-like manner. These gems date to the eleventh or twelfth century (nos. 95, 96, 97).[25] On two sardonyxes that were carved later and date to the twelfth or thirteenth centuries, the figure of Daniel is slimmer, his legs are held together instead of spaced apart, and the lions are shown from above instead of from the side (nos. 92 93).[26] As compacted, round figures with thin tails, they are abstracted to the point that they no longer look like lions.

The gems of the first group, characterized by their shared iconographic theme of Daniel between the lions, are generally earlier in date. The image of Daniel between the lions originates in the early Christian period. As an image that clearly portrayed the theme of salvation from death through faith, it was an ideal image for a funerary context and was represented primarily upon funerary art. Early Christians also invoked the story of Daniel and the lions in prayers for the dead, called the *Commendatio animae.* In these prayers God was urged to save the dead just as he had saved Daniel.[27] The image of Daniel between the lions continued to be represented

[25] These gems are located in the Hermitage Museum, the Christian Museum and Treasure of the Cathedral of Cividale, and the British Museum.

[26] These two sardonyxes are located in the Galleria Sabauda in Turin and in the Hermitage Museum.

[27] On the iconography of Daniel in early Christian art see Fernand Cabrol and Henri Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*, vol. 4 (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1920) col.

unchanged for centuries. Daniel is not a common figure in Byzantine art, but his image can be found in several different contexts including illuminated manuscripts, lead seals, and in a mosaic at the monastery of Hosios Loukas.[28]

The image of Daniel between the lions endured primarily because the theme of God's salvation remained relevant to a Christian society. When considering the meaning of this iconographic theme on gemstone *enkolpia*, it is, however, important to distinguish images that represent the general theme of salvation from images of holy figures who were considered active in bringing salvation. This distinction is significant because after Iconoclasm, the faithful propitiated holy figures directly through iconic images.[29] For this reason, I believe that the prevailing interpretation of Byzantine *enkolpia* with the image of Daniel between the lions, according to which the iconographic theme is held to reference salvation, must be revised.[30]

The distinction between the theme of salvation and a holy figure who could be supplicated for help in attaining salvation can be illustrated through an examination of the theme of Lazarus' resurrection. In the early Christian period the story of Lazarus came to represent the

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221-241. On the theme of Daniel between the lions in early Christian funerary art and rituals see Corrigan, "The Three Hebrews in the Fiery Furnace," 93-95.

[28] On the image of Daniel in illuminated prophet books and the Menologion of Basil II see Lowden, *Illuminated Prophet Books,* 79, and fig. 53. On the image of Daniel in the *Paris Gregory* and the *Christian Topography of Cosmas Indicopleustes* see Leslie Brubaker, *Vision and Meaning in Ninth-Century Byzantium: Image as Exegesis in the Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 365-375. For two examples of lead seals with the image of Daniel between the lions see N. P. Likachev, *Molivdovuly grecheskogo vostoka: k XVIII Mezhdunarodnomu Kongressu Vizantinistov (Moskva, 8-15 avgusta 1991 g.)* (Moscow: Nakua, 1991), 134-135, nos. 8 and 7. For the image of Daniel between the lions in the mosaic ast Hosios Loukas see Lazarides, *The Monastery of Hosios Lukas: Brief Illustrated Archaeological Guide*, 52, no. 35.

[29] Henry Maguire, "Magic and the Christian Image" in Maguire, *Byzantine Magic*, 51-72.

[30] The image of Daniel between the lions on *enkolpia* is interpreted as soteriological in Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Women and their World,* 300-301 and Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 86, no. 27.

theme of salvation from death because Christ resurrected the dead Lazarus from the grave. The image of Lazarus was represented frequently on funerary art alongside other images with soteriological themes including Jonah and the Whale and Daniel between the lions. By the middle Byzantine period, however, it would be quite unusual to find an image of the mummified Lazarus on an icon or an *enkolpion*. This is because Lazarus does not save, he *was* saved. The figures more commonly represented on devotional objects of the middle Byzantine period are Christ, the Virgin, and the saints because it is these holy figures who give salvation or can help a supplicant attain it. With this distinction in mind, it is evident that by the middle Byzantine period the soteriological theme of Daniel between the lions had gained a new dimension, in which Daniel became seen as a figure who could save, protect, and help a supplicant. In other words, Daniel must have become like a Christian patron saint.

Daniel's transition from the object of God's saving grace to a holy figure who could save the faithful himself can be observed in an epigram or short poem by John Maroupos, an eleventh-century scholar and contemporary of Michael Psellos. This poem may have been composed for a personal icon or a lead seal with the image of Daniel. The poem reads:[31]

> Once the lions were a fierce enemy to you, now, however,
> this man named Leo is your poor servant. In the same way that
> you did not receive any harm from them, oh Prophet, save
> him from evil.

In this poem a play on words is made with the name of the supplicant, Leo, and the Greek word for lions, "*leon-tes*." The supplicant's humility and devotion is contrasted with the harmful intentions of the lions. The poem reasons that because Daniel was saved from the lion's den, he

[31] The text published by Anastasi is in Italian translated from the Greek; I have translated it into English from the Italian. See John Mauropus, *Canzoniere*, trans. Rosario Anastasi (Catania: Facoltà di lettere e filosofia, Università di Catania, 1984), 62, no. 88.

should be able to save his servant, Leo. It is as if the ideas expressed in the early Christian *Commendatio animae* have been modified so that it is now Daniel, instead of God, who is asked to bring salvation in the manner in which he was saved long ago. As this poem makes clear, by the eleventh century the prophet Daniel is being supplicated for protection exactly like a Christian saint.

Thus, while the soteriological meaning of the theme of Daniel between the lions remains an important reason that it was represented frequently on stone *enkolpia*, the image's popularity can also be attributed to the fact that Daniel was being venerated as a helpful and protective saint by the middle Byzantine period. Existing interpretations that explain the image of the prophet Daniel on stone *enkolpia* only as soteriological should therefore be revised. A steatite pendant with the image of Daniel between the lions in the Vatopedi Monastery may serve as an example of how the iconographic theme can be reinterpreted (C15). On the Vatopedi steatite Daniel and two lions are represented below two angels. The angels hold spears that angled in such a way as to create the impression that Daniel is standing within a structure with a gabled roof. St. Nicholas and St. Basil are pictured on the reverse. In the catalogue of the *enkolpia* of the Vatopedi Monastery, the theme of Daniel between the lions is explained as soteriological, and the angelic figures have been identified Archangel and Habakkuk.[32] As a prophet, Habakkuk cannot be identified with either of the figures who, with their wings and spears, should clearly be identified as angels. Given the fact that Daniel appears to be standing within a structure that has gabled roof, it is more likely that the scene is intended to be a representation of Daniel's tomb, which was located in Constantinople. From textual sources it is known that Daniel's tomb was supported by two carved stone lions and was decorated by two figures of angels that were placed

[32] Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 86, no. 27.

at the head and the foot of the tomb and appeared like children who were lying down or sleeping.[33] While the image of Daniel between the lions represents the theme of salvation, it should be added that on this *enkolpion* Daniel is actually positioned as a holy figure who could help bring salvation. The image is therefore not only thematic, but also iconic, like the images of the two saints on the reverse side of the *enkolpion.*

A steatite pendant in the Vatican Museum should be interpreted in the same way (C16). The Vatican steatite pairs Daniel with the Archangel Michael on the obverse and two military saints together on the reverse.[34] Daniel's purpose on this *enkolpion* is the same as that of the Archangel and the military saints. All are figures to whom a supplicant could turn for protection and intercession. Daniel's presence among the military saints demonstrates that he has become a patron saint himself, acting as a personal protector on a private devotional object.

Daniel's status as a personal protector also explains why he is paired with St. Marina on two steatite pendants.[35] St. Marina was the patron saint of childbirth, and the steatite pendants with her image are thought to have been owned by women for protection in childbirth or help with fertility. Daniel's presence on the steatites with St. Marina has been explained as evoking the general theme of salvation.[36] It is, however, likely that he is also represented because of his role in saving Susannah in the story of Susannah and the Elders (Daniel 13:1-64). In this story the virtuous Susannah rejected the lecherous advances of the Elders and they, in turn, falsely

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[33] On the tomb of Daniel see Majeska, "Medallion of the Prophet Daniel," 363n12. As Majeska points out, Daniel's tomb is described by several poems of Manuel Philes. See for example, Manuelis Philae, *Carmina: ex codicibus Escurialensibus, Florentinis, Parisinis et Vaticanis*, 51, poem CVIII.

[34] Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 187-188, no. 107.

[35] Ibid., 242-246, nos. A-21 and A-53.

[36] Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Women and their World,* 300-301.

accused her of adultery. Daniel intervened on Susannah's behalf and saved her life. From this story, it can be assumed that Daniel was known as a protector of women. Daniel's role in saving Susannah was most likely well known to the Byzantines, not only because the story of Susannah and the Elders is included in the Greek Septuagint, but also because it is highlighted in the *vita* of Daniel that was written by Symeon Metaphrastes in the tenth century. Metaphrastes wrote: [37]

> We have omitted other things regarding the judgment of Susannah, things done long ago when he was still a youth. What more remains that can surpass that? She has been faithful to her husband but was condemned to death because of the charges of those who looked upon her with unchaste eyes and was like to the suffering which Joseph suffered. Daniel admirably saved her, Daniel who, through his wise judgment defeated the evil of the elders and showed them more worthy of death and brought about their death. When one considers his great judgment, grace, and greatness of sight, since he understood the hidden secrets of God and coming mysteries of the double word which was also made known to others and what would then happen and the resurrection of man and the glory of the saints and the fall of the impious which never ends and the depths of God, how much he, who is clothed in flesh, can learn about the holy spirit and finally, chains dissolved, turned over freed from the world to God whom he desired, a man freed from the desires of the flesh with his three child friends, always conversing with the prophets and not taking anything from us that might defend and aid us.

In this passage of Metaphrastes, Daniel is not only praised as Susannah's intercessor and savior, but he is also considered a protector, seer, and a wise judge. Daniel's reputation as an intercessor, in fact, predates the tenth century; in the *Vitae Prophetarum*, written in the fourth century, Daniel was already considered an intercessor because of his role as a saintly spiritual

[37] Passage and translation from Ringrose, "the Prophet Daniel: Gender, Sanctity, and Castration in Byzantium," 95-96.

advisor to the Babylonian king.[38] The passage by Metaphrastes, the poem written about Daniel by John Maroupos, and the visual evidence from the steatite pendants discussed above lead to the conclusion that when Daniel is represented on gemstone *enkolpia*, he is there as a patron saint to intercede, help, and protect his supplicant. The owners of some of the gems may have been women who hoped that Daniel would save them like he saved Susannah. As Metaphrastes made clear, however, Daniel's protection, fair judgment, and assistance were for everyone. Gemstone *enkolpia* with the image of the prophet Daniel were certainly owned by men as well.

The evidence from the textual sources and *enkolpia* with Daniel's image indicate that his attributes and abilities as a holy figure were somewhat broad, as they ranged from protection to intercession. There is, however, one attribute that sets him apart from other types of Byzantine saints, and that is his divinely inspired intelligence. In the bible, Daniel is distinguished for his knowledge of future evnts and his ability to solve the mysteries of the king's dreams, which even the learned magi cannot understand. Metaphrastes' passage highlights Daniel's wisdom as an important quality, noting that Daniel had "great judgment," "greatness of sight," and "understood the hidden secrets of God."[39] Poems written on *enkolpia* with the image of Daniel highlight intelligence as his distinguishing attribute, suggesting that he may have been considered a holy advisor, which is similar to his identity as a wise judge. For example, in a poem written by Manuel Philes on an icon or *enkolpion* in "demonstone" with images of Daniel, St. Demetiros, and the Archangel Michael, Daniel is called "the mind" (νόος) whereas St. Demetrios is called

[38] David Satran, "Daniel – seer, philosopher, holy man," in *Ideal Figures in Ancient Judaism: Profiles and Paradigms,* eds. John J. Collins and George W. E. Nickelsburg (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1980), 40-43.

[39] Ringrose, "Reconfiguring the Prophet Daniel: Gender, Sanctity, and Castration in Byzantium," 95-96. Ringrose also noted that Metaphrastes positioned Daniel as a court eunuch, and that court eunuchs were known for their cleverness instead of their military prowess. See ibid., 95.

"the soldier" (ὁπλίτης).[40] In another poem on an *enkolpion* of Daniel that was written by an unknown author, Daniel is asked to ward off enemies of the "visible" kind as well as those of the "mind." The poem reads as follows:[41]

> Εἰς ἐγκόλπιον τῆς ἁγίας δεσποίνης
> Ἔχει ὅλον ὡδε·
>
> Λύων ὀνείρους Δανιὴλ Βασιλέως,
> φιμῶν δὲ τοὺς λέοντας ἐν λάκκῳ πάλαι
> ἐχθροὺς ὁρατοὺς καὶ νοουμένους τρέποις
> τῆς αὐτανάσσης Βασιλίδος Εἰρήνης
>
> On an *enkolpion* of the holy mistress
> The following:
>
> Daniel solves the dreams of the King,
> and long ago he muzzled the lions in the pit
> May you turn away enemies (both) visible and conceived in the mind
> Of the independent/autonomous Empress Irene

This poem is interesting in several respects, not least of all for its indication that an *enkolpion* of Daniel between the lions was owned by the Empress Irene. Although there were two Byzantine empresses with the name of Irene, it is likely that the owner of the *enkolpion* was Irene of Athens, the Iconophile empress who ruled by herself, first as a regent and then as a sole ruler from 797 to 802. The fact that the poem refers to the empress as self-ruling (αὐτανάσσης), supports this identification, as does the fact that she is called "holy" (ἁγίας), the Byzantine word that designates a saint. Although Irene of Athens was not officially sainted, she was considered a saint by some for her support of icon veneration, and her *vita* was written in the twelfth

[40] Manuelis Philae, *Manuelis Philae Carmina: Ex Codicibus Escurialensibus, Florentinis, Parisinis Et Vaticanis*, 138, no. CCLXXXV. This poem is fully reproduced and discussed in detail in Chapter Ten.

[41] Lampros, "Ho Markianos kodix 524," 43, no. 80.

century.[42] In the poem, Daniel is asked for physical and mental protection, since he had already proven himself capable of interpreting dreams and warding off lions. This poem, as well as the one by Manuel Philes in which Daniel is referred to as the "mind," gives an impression of Daniel as a patron saint who was especially helpful in matters of the mind, whether in supporting a supplicant's intelligence and good decision making, helping a supplicant control thoughts, or banishing disturbing dreams and mental apparitions.

When considering who, in addition to women, may have been likely to own a gemstone *enkolpion* with the image of Daniel between the lions, it is important to take into account Daniel's association with intelligence as well as his reputation as a fair judge, a friend of the emperor, and a man who successfully navigated a dangerous court. With these attributes in mind, it stands to reason that Byzantine courtiers may have been especially likely to own a gem carved with the image of the prophet Daniel. This idea is supported by evidence from seals. The image of Daniel between the lions appears on four seals that date to the eleventh or twelfth centuries, all of which were owned by individuals with court titles.[43]

It is easy to understand why the figure of Daniel would appeal to a courtier. Daniel's life is marked by great success in the court of King Nebuchadnezzar. Not only did he find favor in the King's eyes, but also he navigated dangerous situations at the Babylonian court with ease. In the tenth century, Daniel's life at court was understood in light of contemporary Byzantine culture, and in Daniel's *vita,* Symeon Metaphrastes even went so far as to present him as a court

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[42] On Irene of Athens see Treadgold, "The Unpublished Saint's Life of the Empress Irene," 238-239 and Paul A. Hollingsworth and Anthony Cutler, "Irene," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (Oxford University Press, 1991), accessed March 25, 2015, http://www.oxfordreference.com.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/view/10.1093/acref/9780195046526.001.0001/acref-9780195046526-e-2505.

[43] Zacos, *Byzantine Lead Seals,* vol. 2, 242, no. 442; G. Schlumberger, "Sceaux byzantins inédits (quatrième série)," *Révue des études grecques* 55 (1900): 490, no. 196; Likachev, *Molivdovuly grecheskogo vostoka,* 134-135, nos. 7 and 8.

eunuch. In the tenth century eunuchs held high positions in the Byzantine court and served as trusted advisors to the emperor, and it has been suggested that Metaphrastes' Daniel may have been modeled after the powerful Basil *parakoimomenos,* who held the position of chief eunuch under the emperors Nikephoros Phokas, John Tzimiskes, and Basil II.[44] Since by the middle Byzantine period the prophet Daniel was understood as a successful court official it is reasonable to suggest that courtiers, and perhaps even eunuchs, may have owned gems carved with the image of Daniel between the lions.

Judges were another type of court official that were especially likely to consider the prophet Daniel as their patron saint. Two of the four seals with the image of Daniel between the lions belonged to judges and are accompanied by inscriptions that refer to Daniel's role in the judgment of Susannah. For example, the inscription on the Hermitage seal reads, "Judge, join in the judging of plain judgments with Gregorios Doxapatres, krites (judge)."[45] These seals demonstrate the affinity that judges must have felt with Daniel and their hope that he would give them wisdom and help them pronounce righteous judgments themselves. Judges should be added to eunuchs, other courtiers, and women as those who were especially likely to have owned a gemstone *enkolpion* with the image of Daniel.

Daniel's new role as a patron saint led to the development of a new iconographic type in which Daniel is represented in bust and holding a scroll or a book. This image is represented on six gems. Three are bloodstones (nos. 125, 159, 188), and three are sardonyxes (nos. 94, 114,

[44] Ringrose, "Reconfiguring the Prophet Daniel," 89-98.

[45] Seal, inscription, and translation for Boulloterion 4378 from M. Jeffreys et al., *Prosopography of the Byzantine World* (2011), accessed November 14, 2014, http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/pbw2011/entity/boulloterion/4378.

198).[46] Daniel is represented with his Phrygian cap and a cape that is fastened around his neck with a circular clasp. On three of the gems he faces frontally, while on the other three he turns to his right. On four of the gems he holds an open scroll. On a fifth, the scroll is rolled up (no. 125). On a sixth, Daniel is pictured holding a book instead of a scroll (no. 94). Daniel is identified by an inscription in which the word "prophet" is represented in a monogram form and the name is Daniel spelled out in individual letters.

It can be concluded that it is Daniel's identity as a prophet that is being emphasized in this image, since in the Byzantine tradition prophets are typically represented holding scrolls. This new, portrait-like image of Daniel as a prophet appears on carved gemstones no earlier than the second half of the twelfth century, when it is first represented on a bloodstone in the Cabinet des Médailles (no. 159). Three of the gems date to the second half of the twelfth century, one dates to the twelfth or thirteenth century, and two date to the late Byzantine period.

This new representation of Daniel on carved gems emphasizes Daniel's abilities in prophecy and dream interpretation, both of which fall within the realm of semi-magical practices. Dream interpretation and divination were at one time considered sorcery, but throughout the course of the middle Byzantine period they were sometimes accepted as long as they were done within the realm of Christianity. For example, the *oneirocritica*, or books on dream interpretation, once outlawed along with a number of magical practices, were made legal in the tenth century during the reign of Emperor Leo VI.[47] The belief that dreams were a legitimate way of understanding present and future events was already widespread, and their

[46] The bloodstones are located in the Correr Museum, the Cabinet des Médailles, and the Sergius Trinity Monastery. One of the sardonyx carvings was located in the Sacristy of the Patriarch in Moscow, but it is now lost. The others are located in the Vatopedi Monastery and the Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel.

[47] Maria V. Mavroudi, *A Byzantine Book on Dream Interpretation: the Oneirocriticon of Achmet and its Arabic Sources*. (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 61-62.

official acceptance is considered a practical acquiescence that took into account the need to interpret dreams for political and military reasons.[48] Divination and prophecy are two sides of the same coin. In Byzantium, occult methods of divination such as necromancy and geomancy were prohibited, but prophetic visions that had been given by God to Old Testament prophets and Christian saints were considered legitimate.[49]

As a holy figure who practiced dream interpretation and prophecy with the blessing and assistance of God, the prophet Daniel became understood as a model practitioner of these semi-magical arts. *Oneirocritica* and apocalypse manuscripts were written in his name because of his reputation as a seer and dream interpreter, and there is evidence that the main purveyors of these texts were members of the imperial court.[50] For example, in the tenth century, Liutprand of Cremona described an apocalypse manuscript attributed to the prophet Daniel that he saw at the Byzantine court of Emperor Nikephoros Phocas. Liutprand related that the text contained predictions about the life of the emperor and the fate of the Byzantine Empire in times of war and peace.[51] Emperor Leo VI himself is associated with an apocalypse manuscript that was likely one that was attributed to the prophet Daniel. According to Anthony of Novgorod, Emperor Leo VI sequestered himself inside of Daniel's tomb and transcribed a prophetic text that revealed that there would be an emperor in Constantinople as long as the city existed. The

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[48] Ibid.; Oberhelman, *Dreambooks in Byzantium,* 52-58.

[49] On Byzantine law as it pertained to magical practices see Marie Theres Fölgen, "Balsamon on Magic: From Roman Secular Law to Byzantine Canon Law" in Maguire, *Byzantine Magic*, 99-115. On the supernatural abilities of Christian saints see Alexander Kazhdan, "Holy and Unholy Miracle Workers" in Maguire, *Byzantine Magic,* 73-82.

[50] On the dreambooks attributed to Daniel see Oberhelman, *Dreambooks in Byzantium,* 59-116. On the apocalypse manuscripts attributed to Daniel see Alexander, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition*, 61-122.

[51] Alexander, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition*, 96-101.

title of the text is unknown but based on its description it is almost certain that it was an Apocalypse of Daniel.[52] The same emperor is thought to be the patron of the dream book of Achmet, which derives from the same tradition as the dream books of Daniel.[53]

Byzantine elites had a special interest in Daniel's prophecies and dream interpretation, which should be understood within the context of their participation in divination and the occult arts.[54] Daniel's prophecies were especially relevant to Byzantine emperors and members of the upper classes because they concern the fate of powerful emperors and empires. I propose, therefore, that it is these elites who were most likely to own a gem carved with an image of Daniel as a prophet holding a scroll.

The reason that the image of Daniel as a prophet appears on *enkolpia* becomes clear when it is considered that all of the gems carved with this image were created during the time of the Crusades, when the fate of the Byzantine empire was in peril. The Byzantines had long interpreted Daniel's Apocalypse in light of current events. Already as early as the seventh century Daniel's Apocalypse was interpreted in light of a major contemporary war, the Arab Conquest. Throughout the ninth and tenth centuries, when new versions of the Daniel's Apocalypse were written, the Byzantines continued to understand the texts in light of current political events and enemy threats.[55]

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[52] Ehrhard, "Le livre du pelerin, d'Antoine de Novgorod," 51-52.

[53] Mavroudi, *A Byzantine Book on Dream Interpretation,* 61.

[54] The participation of the Byzantine elite in divination and the occult arts has been well documented in recent scholarship. See Henry Maguire, "Magic and the Christian Image," 51-72; John Duffy, "Reactions of Two Byzantine Intellectuals to the Theory and Practice of Magic: Michael Psellos and Michael Italikos," in Maguire, *Byzantine Magic*, 83-97; Maria V. Mavroudi, "Occult Science and Society in Byzantium: Considerations for Future Research," in Magdalino and Mavroudi, *The Occult Sciences in Byzantium,* 73-85.

[55] Alexander, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition,* 61-122 (on the texts) and 151-184 (on the theme of the Last Roman Emperor).

Daniel's Apocalypse was interpreted as a promise that God would save the Byzantines and send a last ruler who would re-establish a final Byzantine empire that would endure forever. During the height of the Crusades the Byzantines saw apocalyptic events unfolding all around them. Four new versions of the Apocalypse of Daniel were penned in different languages during this time, one of which was a Greek version that described the destruction that Constantinople and the world would suffer prior to the descent of the Antichrist.[56] A persistent theme in the apocalypse texts attributed to Daniel is the anticipation of the "Last Roman Emperor." This emperor would rise up and defeat the enemies who threatened the Byzantine empire and bring a final period of prosperity.[57] This is, in effect, an apocalyptic happy ending and something that the Byzantines must have believed and prayed for in the last few centuries of their empire's existence.

I have argued already that the prophet Daniel is a patron saint who was represented on *enkolpia* because was considered helpful in bringing to his supplicants intercession, protection, wisdom, and assistance in the physical and mental realms. I have, moreover, concluded that the image of Daniel as a prophet holding a scroll or a book that appears on gemstone *enkolpia* dating to the time of the Crusades expresses the hope of salvation for the Byzantine Empire. Inscriptions that are legible on the open scrolls of two of the gems carved with Daniel's image support this hypothesis. The scroll on the bloodstone in Zagorsk is inscribed with an

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[56] The apocalypse texts penned during the time of the Crusades include one text in the Coptic language, which was also copied in Arabic. One version is in Persian. One text, found in Cairo, is in the Judaic tradition (and presumably in Hebrew; Denis does not specify the language in which it was written). One text is in Greek. See Denis, *Introduction aux pseudépigraphes grecs d'Ancien Testament*, 309-314.
[57] Alexander, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition*, 151-184.

abbreviation of the phrase "The God in Heaven will establish" (no. 188).[58] It refers to Daniel 2:44, which reads, "And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall this kingdom be left to another people. It shall crush all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever."[59] The inscription on Daniel's scroll can also be deciphered on the bloodstone from the Cabinet des Médailles (no. 159). The scroll is inscribed with the words "I Daniel" (ΕΓΟ ΔΑ(νιήλ)). Daniel refers to himself in this way when describing his apocalyptic visions in chapters 7-12 of the Book of Daniel, and the inscription is thought to refer to these prophecies.[60] It is not possible to determine exactly which apocalyptic vision is being referenced because Daniel refers to himself as "I Daniel" several times throughout the chapters. It is, however, likely that it refers to the prophecy in the seventh chapter of Daniel, since this prophecy expresses the same idea that God will establish one final empire to rule forever.

Gemstone *enkolpia* with the image of the prophet Daniel holding a scroll that were carved during the time of the Crusades relate specifically to Daniel's prophecies concerning the fate of empires. The prophet Daniel, already established as a saint-like figure who could intercede, help, and protect the faithful, is expected to intervene on behalf of the Byzantine empire. The inscriptions on the bloodstones in Zagorsk and the Cabinet des Médailles evoke

[58] The inscription, CICTHCIO ΘC του OY, is an abbreviation of the phrase συστήσει ὁ Θεὸς τοῦ οὐρανοῦ. Inscription deciphered, translated, and identified with Daniel 2:44 in Jurgenson, "Zur Frage des Charakters der byzantinischen Plastik während der palaiologenzeit," 271-272.

[59] Michael D. Coogan, "Daniel," in The New Oxford Annotated Bible, Oxford Biblical Studies Online, accessed March 25, 2015, http://www.oxfordbiblicalstudies.com/article/book/obso-9780195288803/obso-9780195288803-div1-872.

[60] Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 348-349, no. 330.

Daniel's prophecy that one final empire would be established in the hopes that he would intervene with God to bring this prophecy to fruition.

Apostles

Apostle saints are represented on eleven gems. Six date to the middle Byzantine period. Three were set into Ottonian treasury objects, which allows them to be dated to the late tenth or early eleventh centuries. The gems include red jasper, green jasper, nephrite, chrysoprase, and bloodstone. Most of them measure between three and four centimeters. Three are formed in an irregular shape that is wider on one end and tapers to a rounded point at the other end. This shape appears to have been chosen to accommodate the representation of the figures in profile.

Of the thirteen apostles, only St. John the Theologian, St. Paul, and St. Peter are represented on Byzantine gems. Similar findings have been made regarding lead seals, upon which the same three apostles, as well as Andrew, are represented far more often than the others.[61] St. Paul is represented by himself on only a single gem, the bloodstone mounted in the cross reliquary of Henry II in Munich (no. 4).[62] He is pictured in bust and turning slightly to the right. In his left hand, which is shrouded beneath garments, he holds a book. He is represented with facial features that are typical of his standard portrait including a high, balding forehead and a long beard. The inscription that identifies him is carved in small, neat letters.

[61] Cotsonis, "The Contribution of Byzantine Lead Seals to the Study of the Cult of the Saints (Sixth-Twelfth Century)," 418.

[62] Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 19.

St. Peter and St. Paul are represented together on a chrysoprase in Karlsruhe and a jasper in the Hermitage Museum (nos. 30, 185).[63] The gems share an identical iconographic theme in which the two apostles are represented side by side, in bust. St. Paul, on the left, is turned slightly inward. In his hands he holds a gospel book. His wavy beard accentuates his long face and his forehead is high and wrinkled. Classicizing garments fall around his body in soft folds. St. Peter, on the right, turns inward towards St. Paul. He holds a scroll in his left hand and points towards himself with his right hand in a gesture of speech. He is represented with his typical portrait features that include classical garb, a short beard, and a full head of hair.

Although the two gems display an identical iconographic theme, the carving style and letter forms of the chrysoprase suggest that it is of an earlier date. Although St. Peter and St. Paul are sometimes found together in Byzantine art, this particular image from the gems is rare. Only one comparison presents itself, an eleventh-century lead seal in the Hermitage that belonged to a bishop.[64] In general, the two apostles are not represented frequently on seals and when they are, they are more frequently pictured in an embrace.[65] As with all of the gems with the representation of apostle saints, these two with the image of St. Peter and St. Paul probably belonged to prominent church officials.

[63] On the chrysoprase see Albani, "The Cameo with the Apostles Peter and Paul in Karlsruhe," 25-30. On the Hermitage gem see Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii*, vol. 3, 162, no. 1018.

[64] Valerij Stepanenko, "The Sts. Apostles Sts. Peter and Paul in Byzantine Sigillography," in *Epeironde: proceedings of the 10th International Symposium of Byzantine Sigillography*, ed. Christos Stavrakos and Barbara Papadopoulou (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2011), 321, no. 2.

[65] On the iconogrpahy of Peter and Paul on seals see Cotsonis, "The Contribution of Byzantine Lead Seals to the Study of the Cult of the Saints," 420.

The remaining eight gems are carved with an image of St. John the Theologian (nos. 3, 5, 13, 123, 171, 182, 183, 186).[66] The gem with the image of St. John the Theologian in the Cabinet des Médailles displays iconography that is rare in Byzantine art (no. 13). This large, round gem is carved from a green jasper stone with white veins. It is carved with an image of St. John the Theologian seated on a backless throne. His head is turned slightly to the right. He holds a book in his left hand and holds his right hand in a blessing gesture. The carving and figure style align the gem with a small group of skillfully carved bloodstones from the late tenth or early eleventh century, one of which is the green jasper of St. Nicholas in the Musée des Beaux Arts in Lyon (no. 14).[67] Since comparisons of a seated St. John the Theologian cannot be found among other images of St. John the Theologian, Mathilde Avisseau's suggestion that the image is derived from that of the enthroned Christ is probably correct.[68]

The other gems with the image of St. John the Theologian display similar iconography. The saint is represented in his standard portrait type with a large, round forehead, a full beard, and classical garb. He holds a gospel book and is turned to either the right or the left. On the gems in Munich and Kassel, the figure is turned only slightly, but on the others the figure is

[66] The gems with the image of St. John the Theologian that were formerly in the Cloister of St. Michael in Bamberg and in the Sacristy of the Patriarch in Moscow are now lost (nos. 5 and 186). See Schramm and Mütherich, *Denkmale der deutschen Könige und Kaiser*, 160, table 341, no. 120 and du Mély, "Le trésor de la Sacristie des patriarches de Moscou," 208-209, no. 4. One is set into the Gospel of Otto III in Munich (no. 3). See Wentzel, "Kameen," 921. Two are located in the Cabinet des Médailles (nos. 13 and 171). See Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 280, no. 188 and 287, no. 203. One, a bloodstone, is located in the Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel (no. 123). See Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 90, no. 85. One, a chrysoprase, is located in the Kunsthistorisches Museum (no. 183). See Eichler and Kris, *Die Kameen im Kunsthistorischen Museum*, 98, no. 138. One gem is located in the Chilandar Monastery (no. 182). See Popovich, "An examination of the Chilandar cameos," 28-34, no. 28.

[67] Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 279, no. 187.

[68] Ibid., 280, no. 188.

represented in three-quarter view. The Munich gem is the earliest of the series and it is evident that the angle at which the figure is turned becomes more pronounced over time.

The question of why the figure of St. John the Theologian is turned to the side requires discussion. In Byzantine art, figures rendered in three-quarter view are usually paired with another figure, either as part of a diptych, a larger visual program, or a double-sided image. It has been suggested that the gems with the image of St. John the Theologian were not originally meant to be worn as *enkolpia* and were instead intended to adorn the covers of gospel books.[69] This would make them part of a larger visual program. Although this is a plausible theory, the fact that there are no surviving Byzantine book covers that are set with carved gems makes it impossible to verify. Further, the uneven surface of the carved relief would require carved gems to be set deep within the cover to prevent chipping. It is more likely, therefore, that theses gems were carved to be worn as *enkolpia.*

This conclusion can be supported by comparative images, which demonstrate that the three-quarter view is actually very common in the iconography of St. John the Theologian, who is represented in three-quarter view whenever he is shown in the act of writing or receiving his divine inspiration. These images are typically found on frontispieces of gospel books. For example, in one illustration from a mid tenth-century manuscript containing the Acts and the Epistles, St. John the Theologian appears much as he does on the bloodstone set into the Ottonian book cover in Munich (no. 3).[70] The saint is also represented in a similar manner on images in different types of media including an eleventh-century seal, a fourteenth-century

[69] Popovich, "An examination of the Chilandar cameos," 32-33.

[70] On the iconography of the Theologian in mauscripts see the illustrations in Hugo Buchthal, "A Byzantine Miniature of the Fourth Evangelist and its Relatives," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 15 (1961): images 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6. Image 3, *(Bodelian Library MS. Canon. gr. 110),* compares especially well with the bloodstone of John the Theologian in Munich, which also dates to the tenth century.

mosaic icon on Mt. Athos, several small steatite icons, and relief sculpture from the late Byzantine period.[71] It can therefore be concluded that the profile image was typical of the iconography of the Theologian. Therefore, the positioning of the Theologian on gems should not lead to the assumption that they were used for any purpose other than as *enkolpia*.

The iconographic elements of the turned figure, the gospel book, and the saint's aged appearance signified that it was the Theologian's identity as the author of the Gospel and the Apocalypse that was represented on Byzantine carved gemstones, and not the youthful St. John who appears at the foot of the cross in Crucifixion scenes. The image chosen for representation on Byzantine gems emphasizes the Theologian's divine inspiration, his gift of prophecy, and his foreknowledge of the Apocalypse.[72] On some images of St. John the Theologian in other media, such as the fourteenth-century micromosaic icon on Mt. Athos and the eleventh-century steatite in the Louvre, the first few words of the Gospel of John are inscribed.[73]

It is likely that most of the gems with the image of St. John the Theologian were owned by members of the clergy. This assumption is based partially on the fact that most lead seals

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[71] The seal of St. John the Theologian is located in the Archeological Museum in Istanbul. See Cheynet, Gökyıldırım, and Bulgurlu, *Les sceaux byzantins du Musée archéologique d'Istanbul*, 115, no. 2.51. The micromosaic icon is located in the Monastery of the Great Lavra on Mt. Athos. See Ryder, *Micromosaic Icons,* 103-104. The steatite carvings are located in Mdina and in the Louvre and are dated to the eleventh century and the late Byzantine period, respectively. See Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite* 180-184, 215-216, nos. 102 and 146. Regarding the image of St. John the Theologian in late Byzantine sculpture, Popovich has compared the iconography of the Theologian as seen on the gems in the Cabinet des Médailles and the Chilandar monastery to art and carvings of the Palaeologian period, including large-scale sculpture. He identified a very close comparison in a stone relief in Demir Kapija. See Popovich, "An examination of the Chilandar cameos," 31-32. Another closely related example from late Byzantine sculpture is a carved capital with the image of St. John the Theologian from the Pammakaristos Cloister that is now in the Museum of Hagia Sophia in Istanbul. This sculpture can be found in Hans Belting, "Der Skulptur aus der Zeit um 1300 in Konstantinopel," *Münchner Jahrbuch der Bildenden Kunst* 23 (1988): 72, no. 9.

[72] Bissera Pentcheva describes this distinction in "Imagined Images: Visions of Salvation and Intercession in a Double-Sided Icon from Pogovano," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 54 (2000): 141-147.

[73] Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 215-216, no. 146; Ryder, *Micromosaic Icons,* 103-104.

with the image of St. John the Theologian belonged to church officials.[74] Clergymen were also the individuals who were most likely to feel a connection with St. John the Theologian. Although most holy figures that appear on Byzantine gems were venerated as intercessors and protectors, St. John the Theologian was celebrated for his role in writing sacred texts. As such, he would not have been an ideal patron saint for the average person. It should, however, be noted that for reasons that are still unknown the cult of the Theologian strengthens during the Palaeologian period and he becomes associated with Apocalyptic prophecy and salvation.[75] It is possible, therefore, that gems with the Theologian's image may have also been owned by individuals who had a special interest in him due to his authorship of the Apocalypse.

Bishop Saints

Bishop saints are represented on seven gems. Six date to the middle Byzantine period and one, a nephrite carving, dates to the late Byzantine period. One is carved with the image of St. Basil the Great and the others are carved with the image of St. Nicholas (nos. 6, 14, 100, 101-103, 184).[76] The single gem carved with the image of St. Basil is a blue chalcedony (no. 100).

[74] Cotsonis, "The Contribution of Byzantine Lead Seals to the Study of the Cult of the Saints," 425.

[75] Pentcheva, "Imagined Images," 148.

[76] The single gem carved with the image of St. Basil is blue chalcedony in the Hermitage Museum (no. 100). See Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 120, no. 629. The other gems are carved with the image of St. Nicholas and are located in the Louvre, the Vladimir and Suzdal Museum of History, Art, and Architecture, the Kremlin Museum, and the Musée des Beaux Arts in Lyon. One was originally in Bamburg, but it is now lost. On the gems in the Louve and the Musée des Beaux Arts in Lyon see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance*, 279, nos. 187 and 287, no. 201. On the gem in Vladimir, see Pucko, "Neskol'ko vizantijskich kamej iz drevnerusskich gorodov," 129-130, no. 12. On the sardonyx in the Kremlin Museum see Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 123, no. 636. On the late Byzantine nephrite in the Kremlin Museum see Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 239-240, no. 42. On the lost gem from Bamburg see Schramm and Mütherich, *Denkmale der deutschen Könige und Kaiser*, 120.

Two of the gems with the image of St. Nicholas are also blue chalcedonies, one is a sardonyx, one is a bloodstone, and one is of nephrite. The type of stone used for the carving of St. Nicholas that was mounted into the "Morgengabe" cross in Bamberg is unknown (no. 6). In the literature the mounted stones, which are now lost, are described only as "eine byzantinische Kamee mit Brusbildern des Erzengels Michael und der hlgn. Nikolaos und Johannes d. Theolog."[77] Given their early date to around the year 1000, all were probably bloodstone.

The green jasper of St. Nicholas in Lyon is larger than average, and the saint is depicted as a standing figure (no. 14). The carving has a statuesque quality that invites a comparison with the large bloodstone and lapis lazuli carvings of the standing figure of Christ that date to the same period (nos. 1, 22).[78] It is also closely related to the green jasper of St. John the Theologian in the Cabinet des Médailles (no. 13). On the green jasper in Lyon, St. Nicholas is represented facing frontally and holding a gospel book from below in an uncovered left hand. He holds his right hand in front of his body in a gesture of blessing. His garments are rendered with detailed precision and include the *omophorion,* a sash decorated with crosses that is the identifying attribute of a bishop saint in Byzantine art. The saint's well-modeled anatomical features include a full, oval-shaped face, a high, round forehead, and a curly beard. These facial features became part of his standard portrait type by the eleventh century and can be found on the other gems with the image of St. Nicholas.[79] The iconography of this gem invites a comparison with the eleventh-century steatite icons of St. Nicholas and St. John Chrysostom in the Cabinet des

[77] Schramm and Mütherich, *Denkmale der deutschen Könige und Kaiser*, 120.

[78] On the bloodstone of Christ in the Victoria and Albert Museum (no. 1), see Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury*, 86-87, b. On the lapis lazuli of Christ in the Kremlin (no. 22), see Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 122, no. 635.

[79] On the portrait type of St. Nicholas on seals see Cotsonis, "The Contribution of Byzantine Lead Seals to the Study of the Cult of the Saints," 434.

Médailles and the Louvre, as well as with the figure of St. Nicholas on the Harbaville Triptych.[80] Its high quality and closeness with carved icons in other precious materials suggests that it was carved for a patron of a very high status.

On five of the gems that represent bishop saint, the figure is represented in bust. On these gems, the saint faces frontally and holds a gospel book in the left hand, which is shrouded in garments. The right hand is held in front of the body in a gesture of blessing. Their identities as bishop saints are indicated by the *omophoria* worn around their necks. The saints are represented in their standard portrait types. The typical portrait representation of St. Nicholas was discussed above, and for St. Basil it consists of a bald head and a long face that ends with a pointed beard.[81] The gems can be compared with several twelfth-century steatite pendants with bust portraits of bishop saints because of their similarities in iconography, size, format, and purpose.[82]

Although St. Basil and St. Nicholas are both bishop saints, their cults differed significantly. St. Basil's cult centered upon his identity as one of the Cappadocian Church Fathers and his activities that contributed to the Orthodox Church and faith. As the Bishop of Caesarea in the mid fourth century, he authored several homilies, a liturgy, and monastic rules that became the cornerstone of Orthodox monasticism. St. Basil is often portrayed alongside St. John Chrysostom in art. The two are frequently depicted in church apses as part of the

[80] On the steatites see Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite*, 104-106, nos. 12 and 13. The Harbaville triptych has been dated to the eleventh century. On this piece see Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium,* 133, no. 89.

[81] Cotsonis, "The Contribution of Byzantine Lead Seals to the Study of the Cult of the Saints," 429.

[82] The steatite carvings are located in the Cabinet des Médailles and the Cyrprus Museum. See Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 176-177, nos. 96-98.

procession of bishops, and on illuminated liturgical roles.[83] Seals with the image of St. Basil were mainly owned by high-ranking church officials and by individuals with careers in the civil administration.[84] The high cost of the precious materials suggests that the gem with St. Basil's image belonged to someone in the former group. This elite group is also thought to have owned micromosiac icons of bishop saints, which were another type of costly devotional art wrought with precious materials and a high level of technical skill.[85]

St. Basil, venerated as a Church Father, was nowhere near as popular as St. Nicholas. St. Nicholas was one of the most widely venerated saints in Byzantium.[86] As a composite saint, his identity is made up of a fusion of two saintly figures, Nicholas of Sion and Nicholas the Bishop of Myra. St. Nicholas of Sion is known for working miracles that include healing and protecting ships at sea. St. Nicholas of Myra was celebrated for protecting innocents from being unjustly executed by intervening on their behalf with the king. After Iconoclasm, the identities of the two saints were combined with the result that the cult of the remarkable St. Nicholas, now a protector, intercessor, healer, and miracle worker, grew rapidly. By the late ninth century he had become an important saint for imperial and elite individuals, as is evident by the fact that he started to appear in artistic representations and was one of several the holy figures to whom Basil I dedicated the *Nea Ekklesia.*[87]

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[83] Barry Baldwin, Alexander Kazhdan, and Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, "Basil the Great," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (Oxford University Press, 1991), accessed November 15, 2014, http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195046526.001.0001/acref-9780195046526-e-0682.

[84] Cotsonis, "The Contribution of Byzantine Lead Seals to the Study of the Cult of the Saints," 431.

[85] Ryder, *Micromosaic Icons*, 57.

[86] Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, *The Life of Saint Nicholas in Byzantine Art* (Turin: Bottega D'Erasmo, 1983), 18-24.

[87] Ibid.

St. Nicholas' popularity is attested to by the frequency with which he appears on lead seals. On seals, he was chosen as a subject far more often than any saint other than the Virgin.[88] Like the Virgin, St. Nicholas was also considered an effective intercessor. The two are frequently found together in Byzantine art, sometimes in revised *Deesis* images in which the Virgin takes the place of Christ in the center of the composition. The two are also frequently paired on double-sided seals, with the Virgin on the obverse and St. Nicholas on the reverse.[89]

St. Nicholas' broad appeal can be explained by the fact that he was thought to be an effective intercessor as well as a miracle worker. As a kindly bishop interested in helping the faithful, he was a saint that was accessible to anyone. It is therefore difficult to determine who may have owned gems carved with St. Nicholas' image. Patterns of ownership on seals confirm the widespread nature of St. Nicholas' cult. Seals with the image of St. Nicholas were almost never owned by members of the imperial family, and only a few belonged to high ranking church officials. The rest belonged to ordinary people including monks, clergymen, military personnel, and those with careers in the civic administration.[90] This testifies to the universal appeal of St. Nicholas' cult and his status as a personal intercessor and protector. It can be concluded that almost anyone may have owned a gemstone *enkolpion* with St. Nicholas' image, provided that they had the means and status to purchase the costly object.

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[88] Cotsonis, "The Contribution of Byzantine Lead Seals to the Study of the Cult of the Saints," 434.

[89] Elena Stepanova, "The Image of St. Nicholas on Byzantine Seals," *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography* 9 (2006): 190-195.

[90] Ibid., 193-195, Cotsonis "The Contribution of Byzantine Lead Seals to the Study of the Cult of the Saints," 437.

Female Saints

Female saints are represented on only two gems. One, a garnet with the representation of St. Irene, is in the Walters Art Gallery (no. 135).[91] The other, a sapphire of St. Marina, is in the State Historical Museum in Moscow (no. 115).[92] Neither saint is represented on lead seals, and there are few images of St. Irene in Byzantine art.[93] St. Marina, however, had a presence in devotional art. She is the only female saint other than the Virgin who was represented on a micromosaic icon. She also appears on several small steatites that were worn as *enkolpia.*[94]

The Walters gem with the representation of St. Irene is small and oval shaped (no. 135). It is the only garnet in this study. The gem is carved an image of a standing female martyr. She is dressed in the typical martyr's attire of a classical robe and holds a cross in her right hand. Her left hand is concealed beneath her garments. The linear carving style and blank, almond shaped eyes suggest a date in the twelfth century. The saint's only identifying attribute is an inscription with the name "St. Irene," which is slightly misspelled.[95]

It is difficult to identify the saint on the Walters gem because there were several female saints with the name of Irene in Byzantium. The two likely candidates are St. Irene of Athens and St. Irene of Chrysobalanton. St. Irene of Athens was a Byzantine empress who was famous

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[91] Anne Garside, ed. *Jewelry: Ancient to Modern* (New York: Viking Press, 1980), 162.

[92] Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 124, no. 641; Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities*, 34.

[93] Cosonis, "The Contribution of Byzantine Lead Seals to the Study of the Cult of the Saints," 477-486.

[94] The micromosaic icon of St. Marina is known only through its mention in an inventory. See Ryder, *Micromosaic Icons,* 58-59. The steatite pendants of St. Marina are not dated. See Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 242-246, nos. A-21, A-48, and A-53.

[95] Η ΑΓ(ία) ΗΡΗΝΗ

for her role in restoring icons during the first resolution of Iconoclasm in the seventh century. Although she was praised as a defender of holy images and considered to be a saint by many, she was never officially canonized.[96] Since St. Irene of Athens was an empress and the figure on the garnet is dressed as a martyr, it is likely she is not the figure represented on the garnet.

Instead, the most likely candidate is St. Irene of Chrysobalanton, an abbess and ascetic who lived in Constantinople in the tenth century.[97] This Irene was purportedly a beautiful woman from an aristocratic background who rose to become the leader of the Chrysobalanton monastery. According to her *vita,* she had magical powers that included the gift of prophecy and the ability to defeat demons. For example, she had foreknowledge of what the other nuns were thinking, which helped her to administer to their spiritual needs. When a demon attacked her with fire, she survived the ordeal calmly. She drove away the demons that had been tormenting a nun with lust in an interesting episode that juxtaposed her holy powers with magical talismans. She died peacefully in old age and was said to answer prayers and provide intercession for devotees who visited her tomb.[98] Although St. Irene of Chrysobalanton was not martyred, the simple garment, mantle, and cross may have been considered a suitable way to represent a saintly female figure who, as an abbot, would not otherwise have distinguishing attributes. St.

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[96] Warren T. Treadgold, "The Unpublished Saint's Life of the Empress Irene," *Byzantinische Forschungen* 7 (1982), 246-247.

[97] Jan Olof Rosenqvist, trans. *The Life of Saint Irene Abbess of Chrysobalanton: A Critical Edition with Introduction, Notes and Indices* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksall, Stockholm, 1986), 3-113, accessed November 12, 2014, http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/irene-chrysobalanton.asp; Kazhdan, Alexander, and Alice-Mary Talbot, "Irene of Chrysobalanton," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*. : Oxford University Press, 1991, accessed November 12, 2014, http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195046526.001.0001/acref-9780195046526-e-2508.

[98] Rosenqvist, *The Life of Saint Irene Abbess of Chrysobalanton*, 3-113, esp. chapters 13, 15, and 24, accessed November 12, 2014, http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/irene-chrysobalanton.asp.

Irene of Chrysobalanton's reputation as a seer, mediator, intercessor, and defender against demons makes it likely that she is the saint represented on the gem in the Walters Art Gallery.

St. Marina is represented on an oval-shaped sapphire in the State Historical Museum in Moscow that dates to the late twelfth or early thirteenth century (no. 115). The sapphire is of a deep blue color that is tinged with purple. St. Marina is represented as a bust figure holding a martyrs cross in her right hand. Her left hand may be shrouded in her garment or held out to the viewer; its position cannot be clearly ascertained because of damage on the surface of the gem. With her narrow pointed head and the diagonal folds of her garments, St. Marina resembles the Virgin on other twelfth-century gems, such as the amethyst in Kassel (no. 113).[99] St. Marina is represented in a similar manner on a reliquary that contained her arm in Venice, three small steatite pendants, a mosaic in Hosios Loukas, and a painted icon in the Menil Collection.[100]

There were two saints with the name of Marina that were venerated in Byzantium. One, whose cult originated in Syria, is known today as a "transvestite nun." In order to follow her beloved father into a monastery, Marina disguised herself as a man and lived a monastic life. According to her *vita* she was unjustly accused of fathering an illegitimate child and chose to raise the child to glorify God.[101] The other, St. Marina of Antioch, was a virgin martyr who died during the reign of Diocletian. As a martyr, it must be this Marina who is represented on the

[99] Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 90, no. 82.

[100] The reliquary dates to before 1204. See Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium,* 496, no. 332. The steatite pendants of St. Marina are not dated. See Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 242-246, nos. A-21, A-48, and A-53. The mosaic in Hosios Loukas dates to the eleventh century. The painted icon dates to the thirteenth century. On the painted icon and the mosaic, as well as other examples of images of St. Marina, see Jaroslav Folda "The Saint Marina Icon, Maniera Cypria, Lingua Franca, or Crusader Art?" in *Four Icons in the Menil Collection,* ed. Bertrand Davezac (Houston: Menil Foundation, 1992), 107-132, nos. 99 and 101.

[101] Nicholas Constans trans., "Life of St. Mary/Marionos," in *Holy Women of Byzantium: Ten Saints' Lives in English Translation* ed. Alice-Mary Talbot (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1996), 1-12.

sapphire. Her relics were housed in Constantinople until 1213, when they were removed and taken to Venice.[102] It is interesting to note that the sapphire carving of St. Marina dates to approximately the time period at which St. Marina's relics were taken from Constantinople.

St. Marina of Antioch was known as a healer, and St. Marina of Syria was considered a patron saint of childbirth and fertility because of her role in raising an illegitimate child. It is thought that by the Byzantine period the identities of these two Marinas were sometimes conflated and that St. Marina of Antioch, the martyr, also became recognized as a patron saint of childbirth.[103] It is thought that the steatite pendants of St. Marina were owned by women who hoped that St. Marina would help them through some aspect of pregnancy.[104] The sapphire with the image of St. Marina in the State Historical Museum of Moscow was likely intended to serve the same purpose. Its owner was probably a woman and, based upon the size of the gem, its value, and its purple color, she is likely to have been a woman of imperial or aristocratic standing.

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[102] Folda "The Saint Marina Icon," 107-132, esp. 107-115. The removal of relics is also noted in Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium,* 496, no. 332.

[103] Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Women and their World,* 300-301, no. 185; James Rodriguez, "Manifold Marina," in *Byzantine Things in the World*, eds. Glen Peers, Charles Barber, and Stephen Caffey (Houston: Menil Collection, 2013), 152-154. On a childbirth ritual associated with the cult of St. Marina that survived at least until the nineteenth century in Greece, see Gerald V. Lalonde, "Pagan Cult to Christian Ritual: The Case of Agia Marina Theseiou," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 45 (2005): 94.

[104] Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Women and their World,* 300-301.

Narrative Scenes

The subject matter represented on Byzantine gems can be categorized into two types of images: narratives and portraits. Portraits display one or more figures represented in bust form or standing. In most cases, only a single figure is represented. Narrative elements may be present in portrait images. For example, on the Cabinet des Médailles sardonyx, Christ is represented in the act of blessing St. George and St. Demetrios (no. 142).[105] Although there is a narrative element to this scene, its primary purpose is not to tell a story, but to show the saints in a manner that was especially honorific. The narrative scenes that are represented on carved gemstones are drawn from the stories that make up the Twelve Feasts of the Orthodox Church.

Only twelve gems are carved with narrative scenes, which accounts for just six percent of the gems in this study. The small percentage of gems with narrative scenes is roughly consistent with what can be observed on two related types of objects, lead seals and bronze cross-shaped pectoral reliquaries. Only 1.6 percent of surviving Byzantine lead seals and 0.9 percent of surviving bronze cross-shaped pectoral reliquaries display narrative scenes.[106] Narrative scenes were infrequently represented on carved gemstones because iconic, portrait images of patron saints were better suited to the function of *enkolpia* as devotional objects. Complex, multi-figure

[105] Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 282-283, no. 193.

[106] John Cotsonis, "Narrative Scenes on Byzantine Lead Seals (Sixth-Twelfth Centuries): Frequency, Iconography, and Clientele," *Gesta* 48.1 (2009): 59; Pitarakis, *Les croix-reliquaires,* 63-68. The definition of narrative scenes in Pitarakis' study excludes images of Christ on the Cross, which is one of the most ubiquitous themes on cross-shaped reliquaries.

compositions were also more difficult to carve in the hard material and required larger gemstones.[107]

The narrative scenes represented on the twelve gems are the Crucifixion, the Transfiguration, the Anastasis, and the *Koimesis*, which is also known as the Dormition of the Virgin. The theme that is represented the most often is the Crucifixion. It appears on eight of the twelve gems (nos. 12, 33, 48, 140, 144, 145, 146, 147).[108] Three are bloodstones, two are sardonyx, and two are sapphire. One, in the Treasury of San Marco, is a roundel of lapis lazuli with the figures cast in gold relief (no. 146).[109] Technically, it is not a carved gem, but it has been included in this study because it is a small relief icon in semi-precious stone. Five of the gems display the traditional Crucifixion image in which Christ is pictured on the cross in the center of the composition and the Virgin and John the Theologian stand to either side. A sun and moon are sometimes represented on either side of the cross. On one example, the sardonyx in the reliquary cross in Prague, the sun and moon have been replaced by angels (no. 140).

The sardonyx in the Kremlin Museum and the lapis lazuli in the Treasury of San Marco are inscribed with the phrases "This is your son" and "This is your mother," which appear frequently beneath the arms of the cross on middle Byzantine Crucifixion scenes (nos. 13,

[107] The gems carved with narrative scenes tend to be larger than average and most have wide formats.

[108] The sardonyx of the Crucifixion is located in the Kremlin (no. 13). See Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 125, no. 649. A sapphire of the Crucifixion is mounted in the "Crown of St. Wencelas" in the St. Vitus Cathedral at Prague Castle (no. 33). On this gem see Wentzel, "Kameen," 922. A bloodstone of the Crucifixion is located in the Victoria and Albert Museum (no. 48). See Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury*, 86-87 d. A sardonyx is located in the reliquary cross in Prague (no. 140). See Bauer, "The Reliquary Coronation Cross from St. Vitus Treasury," 1. A bloodstone of the Crucifixion is located in the Vatican Museum (no. 144). See Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen in den Sammlungen Italiens," 271. A bloodstone and a lapis lazuli are located in the treasury of San Marco in Venice (nos. 145, 146). On the bloodstone, see Ross, "Three Byzantine Cameos," 44-45, no. 3. On the lapis lazuli, see Buckton, *The Treasury of San Marco,* 258-262, no. 36. A sapphire is located in the Kremlin Museum (no. 147). See Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 224-225, no. 36.

[109] Buckton, *The Treasury of San Marco,* 258-262, no. 36.

146).[110] The phrases refer to Christ's dying words spoken when he urged the Virgin and St. John the Theologian to take care of one another after his death. After Iconoclasm, Christ's words were interpreted as a reference to his humanity through his relationship with the Virgin, his mother. They thereby gained new significance as a reference to the Incarnation and to the Virgin's ability to act as an intercessor with Christ.[111] Another gem, the bloodstone in the Victoria and Albert Museum, is inscribed under the cross with the word "The Crucifixion" (no. 48).[112]

While the basic compositional elements remain the same on all of the gems, iconographic variations occur over time that increasingly represent Christ's suffering and the Virgin's grief.[113] On the earliest of the Crucifixion gems, the tenth-century sardonyx in the Kremlin, Christ does not appear to be suffering (no. 12). His eyes are open and he holds himself upright on the cross. The Virgin and St. John the Theologian display no emotion. On gems that are later in date such as the sardonyx in the reliquary cross in Prague, which dates to the twelfth or thirteenth century, Christ's body and demeanor show the pain and suffering of death by crucifixion (no. 140). His body is curved in order to show that he lacks the strength to hold himself upright, his head hangs wearily to the side, and his eyes are closed. The Virgin and St. John the Theologian appear sorrowful, with their heads bent down towards their hands in grief.

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[110] The inscription on the sardonyx reads: IΔE O Y(ιο)C COY IΔOY H MHT(ηρ) CO(υ). The inscription on the lapis lazuli in the Treasury of San Marco reads: IΔE O Y(ιο)C COY IΔOY H Μήτη)P COY.

[111] On the significance of the phrases "This is your mother" and "This is your son" in Crucifixion scenes see Kalavrezou, "Images of the Mother: When the Virgin Mary became *Meter Theou*," 168-170.

[112]H CTAYΩCIC, most likely meaning Ἡ Σταύρωση or "The Crucifixion."

[113] The iconography of the Crucifixion evolves in the eleventh and twelfth centuries towards a greater emphasis upon the suffering of Christ and the emotions of the Virgin and St. John the Theologian. See Maguire, *Image and Imagination: The Byzantine Epigram as Evidence for Viewer Response*, 24.

The other three gems with the image of the Crucifixion are formed in the shape of the cross and as such may be considered as gemstone crucifixes. In form and iconography they compare closely with cross-shaped pectorals in bronze. Two of the gems shaped like crucifixes are sapphires. One of the sapphire crucifixes is located in the Kremlin Museum and the other is set into the Crown of St. Wencelas in Prague (nos. 33, 147). Both crucifixes appear to be somewhat roughly hewn, but it should be remembered that sapphire is harder than chalcedony and jasper, with a value of 9.0 on the Mohs scale.[114] Carving a complicated scene such as the Crucifixion in sapphire would have been extremely difficult. These two sapphires would have been very costly because of the preciousness of the material and the skill required to carve them. The older of the two is the sapphire set into the Crown of St. Wencelas in Prague (no. 33). The arms of the cross are straight, rectangular, and roughly equal in size. Christ is represented with a bare chest and a loincloth. His body curves slightly, and his head hangs to the left. As a result of the dimensions of the cross, Christ's legs and the loincloth appear disproportionately short. Busts of the Virgin, St. John the Theologian, and an angel are represented in the arms of the cross. Holy figures are represented an identical manner on cross-shaped pectorals in bronze from the eleventh century. One of these, an eleventh-century pectoral from the Khanenko collection in Kiev, provides a close comparison to the sapphire in iconography and style.[115]

At 4.2 cm in height, the Kremlin sapphire is almost twice the size of the sapphire in the Bohemian crown (no. 147). The larger size of the Kremlin sapphire permitted a more complex composition. It is more elaborately formed into the shape of the patriarchal cross, which has two cross bars. There are no holy figures pictured in the arms of the cross. Christ's body is

[114] Webster and Read, *Gems: Their Sources, Descriptions, and Identification*, 73-78.

[115] Pitarakis, *Les croix-reliquaires,* 74-77, no. 51.

naturalistically modeled. His arms and head are carved in higher relief than the rest of his body. His suffering is represented by his closed eyes, curved body, and tilted head. The piece can be dated to the twelfth century because of the portrayal of Christ's suffering.

The third gem that is formed in the shape of a crucifix is the bloodstone in the treasury of San Marco (no. 145). It is set within a reliquary of the Holy Blood of Christ. It is thought that the bloodstone crucifix is older than the reliquary and was re-cut in order to be fitted within it. The reliquary is considered Byzantine and is thought to date to before the year 1204.[116] The cross is narrow and the figure of Christ is slender but proportional. No other holy figures are represented. The figure of Christ compares well to metal reliefs of Christ Crucified that have been affixed to stone crosses. Two of these stone crosses are located in the Kremlin Museum and have been dated to the twelfth through the fourteenth centuries.[117]

The Crucifixion represents the pivotal moment in the story of Christian salvation in which Christ dies on the cross for the sins of mankind. As a powerful image of salvation and victory over death, it was frequently represented on works of devotional art including icons in ivory, steatite, and micromosaic icons, as well as on cross-shaped pectorals. The Crucifixion was a popular subject for devotional art because of its clear message of salvation and because it served as a visual aid for contemplating Christ's passion and suffering. A focus on Christ's death, the mystery of the passion, and the Virgin's grief became especially important in

[116] I have been unable to obtain a high quality photograph of this gem. From the images published by Marvin Ross and Charles Davis, however, it can be noted that an image of Christ crucified is carved on a narrow stone cross. See Ross, "Three Byzantine Cameos," 44-45, no. 3 and Davis, *Byzantine Relief Icons in Venice and Along the Adriatic Coast,* plate 27. The reliquary is also published and described by Andreas Rhoby in his study on epigrams, although he does not discuss the bloodstone crucifix. See Rhoby, "Byzantinische Epigramme auf Ikonen und Objekten der Kleinkunst," 257-258, no. Me83.

[117] Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 170-171, nos. 63 and 64.

Crucifixion icons and Passion liturgy in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.[118] As small, personal devotional objects, gems carved with the image of the Crucifixion would have been used to express devotion to Christ, both for contemplating his sufferings during the Passion and for praying directly to Christ. Gems with the image of the Crucifixion may have also functioned like cross-shaped pectorals, such as the cross-shaped phylacteries in bronze. The form of the cross was considered protective and cross-shaped pectorals were worn for protection as well as for intercession.[119] Given the formal and iconographic similarities between the two object types, it is likely that the gems that represent the Crucifixion, especially those that were cut as crucifixes, functioned similarly to the cross-shaped pectorals as personal protective objects. While the cross-shaped pectorals in bronze were affordable for many people, gems carved with an image of the crucifixion would have belonged only a few from the highest classes. The gems with the image of the Crucifixion that are large in size and carved from high quality and expensive stones such as sapphire and lapis lazuli may well have belonged to imperial patrons. Niketas Choniates wrote that Emperor Romanos Diogenes owned a stone cross that he described as "most beautiful and unusual" and "carved of shining precious stone, on which art had depicted the Divine Countenance…"[120] Choniates' description of the stone cross testifies to its rarity and value, suggesting that such precious objects were owned by only the few who could afford them.

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[118] On the Crucifixion image as one of the "new style of icons" of the eleventh and twelfth centuries see Belting, *Likeness and Presence,* 261-271. On the Crucifixion in devotional art see Corrigan, "Text and Image on an Icon of the Crucifixion," 46-57. On the Crucifixion and related themes such as the Lamentation in devotional art of the eleventh and twelfth centuries see Ioli Kalavrezou, "Exchanging Embrace: The Body of Salvation," in Vasilakē, *Images of the Mother of God: Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium,* 105-109.

[119] Pitarakis, *Les croix-reliquaires*, 84.

[120] "ἔφασκον δὲ οἱ κατὰ τὸ Κέζερ Καρακηνοὶ πάλαι ποτὲ τοὺς προγόνους αὐτῶν ἐκ τῶν προσενεχθέντων δώρων τῷ Βασιλεῖ δορύκτητα σκεῖν τόν τε ἐκ λίθου ἀκτινώδους σταυρὸν καὶ τὴν πολυτελῆ καὶ οἵαν ἐκπλῆξαι τράπεζαν…" Nicetas Choniates, Nicetas, *Grandezza e catastrofe di Bisanzio: narrazione*

The *Koimesis,* or the Dormition of the Virgin, is represented on a single gem, a chrysoprase in the Kremlin Museum (no. 148). This image represents the moment of the Virgin's death, at which time Christ took her soul directly to heaven. The chrysoprase with the image of the *Koimesis* was set into its current mount, a Russian *panagia*, in the year 1671. Measuring 4.6 cm wide by 3.5 cm high, its horizontal format was chosen to accommodate the width of the multi-figure composition.[121] It is inscribed with the words "The *Koimesis* of the Mother of God" and "Jesus Christ."[122] The bodies of the figures in the scene are unintelligible beneath voluminous garments and appear large in relation to the figures' heads. This figure style can be used to date the piece to the late Byzantine period.[123] The dead Virgin is represented lying down upon a bed. The bed is surrounded by grieving apostles, and angels hover above. Christ stands in the middle holding the Virgin's soul as one would an infant. Although plastic modeling has been employed for the rendition of facial features, the garments were wrought in a linear carving style. The garments can be compared to those on the ivory icon of the Lamentation in the Rosgarten Museum.[124]

The *Koimesis* was frequently represented on works of devotional art, especially those wrought in precious materials. On ivories, the *Koimesis* is represented more frequently than any

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cronologica., trans. Riccardo Maisano, Anna Pontani, and Jan Louis van Dieten (Milan: Fondazione Loreno Valla, 1994), 72. Passage cited and translated in Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 195 and 224.

[121] Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 236-238, no. 41; Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 125, no. 646.

[122] Inscriptions: Η ΚΟΙΜΗCΙC ΤΗC Θ(εοτό)ΚΟΥ and Ι(ησοῦ)C Χ(ριστό)C

[123] The gem has been dated to the late Byzantine period in Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities*, 236-238, no. 41. Sterligova also pointed out that the iconographic detail in which several figures face away from the bed only appears in late Byzantine representations of the *Koimesis.*

[124] The ivory icon in the Rosgarten Museum has been dated to the middle Byzantine period. See Urs Peschlow, "Ein paläologisches Reliefdenkmal in Konstantinople," *Gesta* 33.2 (1994): 96, no. 5.

theme other than the Crucifixion.[125] On steatites, it is represented on several icon plaques dating from the tenth through twelfth centuries.[126] Ioli Kalavrezou has written that the *Koimesis* was a popular subject for devotional art because it represents salvation from death. Most people could identify with the emotional bond between Christ and his mother, and the promise of the rebirth of the soul through Christ at the time of death provided a powerful message of hope.[127] The owner of the chrysoprase with the image of the *Koimesis* may have chosen the image with the hope that Christ would offer them mercy and salvation as well at their own time of death.

The Anastasis is represented on a red jasper in the State Historical Museum in Moscow (no. 177).[128] This gem is large, measuring 6.2 cm in height, and has a rectangular base and an arched top. Christ is shown striding over the broken gates of Hades, which are represented as two doors crossed over each other. Christ pulls Adam out of Hades with his right hand, moving away from Adam yet glancing back at him over his shoulder. He holds a patriarchal staff in his left hand. Other figures are represented on both sides of Christ. In most representations of the Anastasis, Eve is represented next to Adam and the Old Testament kings David and Solomon are represented on the right. Additional figures such as St. John the Baptist are sometimes present.[129] On this composition only Adam and Eve are represented on the left but a third figure,

[125] Kalavrezou, "Exchanging Embrace: The Body of Salvation," 108n22.

[126] Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 91-94, 166, nos. 1, 2, and 72.

[127] Kalavrezou, "Exchanging Embrace: The Body of Salvation," 107-108.

[128] Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 125, no. 645.

[129] Thalia Gouma-Peterson, "A Byzantine Anastasis Icon in the Walters Art Gallery," *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 42/43 (1984/1985): 48-49; Anna Kartsonis, *Anastasis: The Making of an Image* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 165-168.

most likely John the Baptist, is represented on the right in addition to King David and King Solomon.

The Anastasis image portrays the themes of salvation and victory over death.[130] It represents a resurrection story from an apocryphal text in which Christ breaks down the door of Hades and rescues deserving Old Testament figures who lived before Christ came to earth to save mankind. Although this story does not occur in the bible, it became the standard Byzantine image of the Resurrection. As one of the narrative scenes of the Twelve Feasts, it was the liturgical image for Easter. Variations on the iconography of the Anastasis exist which affect the positioning of Christ and the number of additional figures incorporated into the scene. One major type shows Christ striding towards Adam to rescue him while the second shows Christ striding away and pulling Adam from behind. A later type, represented on the fresco in the Chora Church in Constantinople, shows Christ standing frontally and pulling both Adam and Eve out of Hades.[131] The image portrayed on the gem is of the second type. This type also appears on two lead seals that date to the twelfth century.[132] While the presence of two lead seals with this image of the Anastasis might suggest a twelfth-century date for the chrysoprase, its carving style and epigraphy are very close to that of several eleventh-century bloodstones with the image

[130] Gouma-Peterson, "A Byzantine Anastasis Icon in the Walters Art Gallery," 48-51; Kartsonis, *Anastasis: The Making of an Image,* 165-177.

[131] Ibid.

[132] Jean-Claude Cheynet, Turan Gökyıldırım, and Vera Bulgurlu, *Les sceaux byzantins du Musée archéologique d'Istanbul* (Istanbul: İstanbul Araştırmaları Enstitüsü, 2012.), 538, no. 6.15; Nesbitt and Oikonomides, *Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks*, vol. 5, 41, no. 19.3.

of Christ (nos. 25-28).[133] A date in the eleventh century is therefore most likely for the chrysoprase with the image of the Anastasis in the Kremlin.

The Transfiguration is represented on two gems. One, a bloodstone, is located in the Kunsthistorisches Museum and the other, a sardonyx, is located in the Kremlin (nos. 149, 150).[134] There is also a sardonyx set into a Russian *panagia* in the Hermitage that is not Byzantine; its origins are unknown but it may be an Italian work in the Byzantine style.[135] The Transfiguration illustrates a story from the Book of Matthew, according to which Christ was raised up in divine glory before the apostles John, James, and Peter (Matthew 17:1-8). This episode took place during the life of Christ, before the Crucifixion. While Christ was illuminated in divine light the Old Testament figures Moses and Elijah appeared alongside him. The Transfiguration was interpreted as a sign of Christ's divinity as well as a foreshadowing of the Resurrection of Christ and, eventually, all Christians. As one of the Twelve Feasts, it was celebrated on the sixth of August.[136]

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[133] Three of the bloodstones represent Christ Pantokrator and one represents Christ Enthroned. The bloodstones of Christ Pantokrator are located in the British Museum, the State Historical Museum in Moscow, and the Vatopedi Monastery. On the British Museum gem, see Dalton, *Catalogue of the Engraved Gems of the Post-Classical Periods in the Department of British and Mediaeval Antiquities* (London: Printed by order of the Trustees, 1915), 2, no. 8. On the gem in the State Historical Museum of Moscow, see Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 124, no. 643. On the gem in the Vatopedi Monastery see Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 42-43, no. 7. The bloodstone of Christ Enthroned is located in the Hermitage Museum. See Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 124, no. 644.

[134] On the bloodstone, see Eichler and Kris, *Die Kameen im Kunsthistorischen Museum*, 228-230, no. 38. On the sardonyx, see Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 228-230, no. 28.

[135] Piatnitsky, "Панагия с камеей "Преображение" из коллекции Эрмитажа = Panagia with 'The Transfiguration' Cameo from the Hermitage Collection (In Russian with English Resume)," 237.

[136] Gerhard Podskalsky, Robert F. Taft, and Annemarie Weyl Carr, "Transfiguration," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (Oxford University Press, 1991), accessed November 15, 2014, http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195046526.001.0001/acref-9780195046526-e-5561.

The bloodstone in the Kunsthistorisches Museum is a large, oval shaped gem that measures 6.6 cm in height (no. 149). It is nearly as wide as it is high. An inscription at the top reads "The Metamorphosis," which is the Greek word for the Transfiguration.[137] The gem's iconography is typical of Transfiguration scenes from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and can be compared with a micromosaic icon of the Transfiguration in the Louvre, which dates to the late twelfth century.[138] It also compares well with the image of the Transfiguration on the lead seals of John Komnenos, *doux* of Dyrrachion, which date to the late eleventh or twelfth century.[139] Christ is represented in the center of the composition in a mandorla. Lines representing rays of light connect him with each of the surrounding holy figures. Moses and Elijah are represented to either side, with Moses on the left and Elijah on the right. The stunned apostles cower below, their expressions and gestures conveying their shock at the event and the blinding force of the divine light. John kneels below while James leans away from the light. Only Peter, represented on the left, stretches his arm out towards Christ. The carving style is rather abbreviated and the figures have stocky proportions. In style, the piece is similar to bloodstones from the twelfth century such as the jasper of the Virgin Hodegetria in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin.

The Kremlin Transfiguration is a sardonyx with figures carved from a light, cream colored stone with a slight yellow tint (no. 150). The figures are juxtaposed against a black background. The stone is large, measuring 7 cm in height. It was once oval in shape but the lower part of the gem has been broken or cut. It was reconstructed with an enameled plate

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[137] Η ΜΗΤΑΜΟΡΦΩCΗ

[138] Evans and, *The Glory of Byzantium,* 130, no. 77.

[139] Nesbitt and Oikonomides, *Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks*, vol. 1, 41, no. 12.3, 98, no. 30.1.

formed and painted to represent the rocks of Mt. Tabor, the location at which the Transfiguration took place.[140] The iconography on the Kremlin sardonyx deviates slightly from the typical image represented in middle Byzantine art. The composition is narrow and the positions of St. John and St. Peter have been reversed. Although St. Peter is now in the middle, he remains positioned diagonally as if he were seated on a sloping surface, with the result that he appears to float. The necks of the apostles are craned so that their heads angle upwards at an unnatural angle. The gem has been dated to the late thirteenth century because of these iconographic variations and because of the carving and figure styles, which are characterized by heavy drapery folds, large heads, and intense, expressive facial expressions.[141]

Although one gem, the sardonyx Crucifixion in the Kremlin, dates to the tenth century, the majority of the gems with representations of narrative scenes date to the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The chrysoprase with the image of the *Koimesis* and the sardonyx with the image of the Transfiguration date to the late Byzantine period. Based on their large size, workmanship, and precious materials, it can be concluded that the owners of gems carved with narrative scenes were wealthy individuals from the highest classes. In his study of lead seals with narrative scenes, Dr. John Cotsonis came to similar conclusions. He proposed that seals carved with narrative scenes in the eleventh and twelfth centuries belonged to elite individuals who could afford to commission seals with more complicated compositions. He also noted that the upper classes had a great interest in the narratives of the Twelve Feasts during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, which can also confirmed by the number of icons in other luxurious materials such as

[140] Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities*, 228-230, no. 38.

[141] Ibid.

steatite that display narrative scenes and date to this time period.[142] It should be assumed that all of these objects, from narrative seals to precious carved gems, were owned by the same elite groups of people.

[142] Cotsonis attributes the aristocratic interest in narrative lead seals to the changing trends in devotion, art, and rhetoric. See Cotsonis, "Narrative Scenes on Byzantine Lead Seals," 59-71. On the "new style of icons" in which elements from liturgy and rhetoric are expressed in visual terms, see Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, 261-296.

Chapter Nine: The Function of Byzantine Carved Gemstones as Devotional Objects and Their Materiality

This chapter explores the function of Byzantine carved gemstones as devotional objects. In part I, I examine the use of carved gemstones as *enkolpia*, using texts as well as evidence from the carved gemstones in order to develop an understanding of the way that a gemstone *enkolpion* mediated the relationship between supplicant and patron saint. Part II turns to a study of the materiality of carved gemstones, with the goal of understanding the ways in which the material properties of gemstones enhanced their efficacy as devotional objects.

As discussed in Chapter Two, most carved gemstones were worn as *enkolpia*, or pectoral pendants. The evidence that in Byzantium most carved gemstones served primarily as *enkolpia* comes from the carved gemstones that are still in their Byzantine settings. Although few carved gemstones survive in settings that can be dated to the Byzantine period, among those that do survive, all but one are set into *enkolpia* frames. They include the sardonyx of St. George and the bloodstone of Christ Pantokrator in the Vatopedi Monastery (nos. 83, 120), the double-sided lapis lazuli with Christ and the Virgin in the Louvre (no. 56), the sardonyx of St. Nicholas in the Kremlin Museum (no. 103), and the bloodstone of Christ Standing, which is also in the Kremlin Museum (no. 21).[1] The *enkolpia* frames range from simple settings adorned with a thin, twisted

[1] On the gems in Byzantine frames in the Vatopedi Monastery (nos. 83, 120) see Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia*, 43-44n8, no. 8 and 82-83, no. 25. On the lapis lazuli carving in the Louvre (no. 56) see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 284, no. 195. The frame of the bloodstone in the Kremlin is discussed in the recent catalogue of Byzantine art in the Kremlin, in which it is tentatively dated to the tenth through the twelfth century on the basis of its metalwork (no. 21). It is also noted that traces of the original loop are still present on the reverse. See Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 204-206, no. 28. The sardonyx of St. Nicholas in the Kremlin and its frame have been discussed by Alisa Bank and Marvin Ross, both of whom concluded that it is medieval but disagreed upon its attribution (no. 103). Bank suggested that it might be a twelfth-century Russian frame, while Ross concluded that the frame was Byzantine from the late tenth or eleventh century. See Bank, *Iskusstvo*

gold wire, like the frame of the sardonyx of St. George in the Vatopedi Monastery, to more elaborate settings into which the larger carvings of lapis lazuli and bloodstone in the Louvre and the Kremlin are set.

In addition to the gemstones that have been mounted as *enkolpia* since the Byzantine period, many others have survived in Russian settings that date to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In Russia, carved gemstones were also worn as pectorals that were called *panagia* instead of *enkolpia.* Given that Russia emulated many aspects of Byzantine art, culture, and religion, their use of carved gemstones as *panagia* probably represents continuity with Byzantine practices. Byzantine carved gemstones were given by the Byzantine emperor and patriarch to Russian church officials as gifts in the fourteenth century, and it may be that the Russians adopted the Byzantine practice of wearing gemstone pectorals with images of holy figures at this time.[2]

The one carved gemstone that survives in a Byzantine setting that is not an *enkolpion* is the bloodstone crucifix set into the Reliquary of the True Blood in the treasury of San Marco (no. 145). Since the crucifix was cut down before it was set into the reliquary, it is thought that it was originally carved for some other purpose, most likely to be worn as an *enkolpion*.[3] As noted in Chapter Two, it is significant that the gemstone crucifix is hidden inside of the reliquary, instead of mounted outwardly as a decoration, due to the possibility that Byzantine carved gemstones

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Vizantii, vol. 2, 123, no. 636; Bank, *Prikladnoe Iskusstvo Vizantii,* 136; Ross, "Three Byzantine Cameos," 43-44, no. 1.

[2] On the Byzantine gems given as gifts to Russian officials see Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 20-21.

[3] On the gemstone crucifix see Ross, "Three Byzantine Cameos," 44-45, no. 3. On the reliquary see Davis, *Byzantine Relief Icons in Venice and Along the Adriatic Coast,* plate 27; Rhoby, "Byzantinische Epigramme auf Ikonen und Objekten der Kleinkunst," in Hörandner, Paul, and Rhoby, *Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung*, 257-258, no. Me83.

may have adorned holy objects. There is no material evidence to indicate that gemstones carved with images of holy figures were repurposed to adorn religious objects in Byzantium. There are Byzantine carved gemstones that served a decorative purpose on book covers, icon frames, and reliquaries in the medieval West, and there are also Byzantine book covers, icons frames, and reliquaries that are decorated with gemstones. None of the gemstones that adorn Byzantine religious objects, however, are carved with holy images.

Finally, the small size of Byzantine carved gemstones may be cited as evidence that most were worn as *enkolpia*. The carved gemstones in this study average 3.7 cm in height and have a median height of 3.3 cm.[4] Most are round or oval in shape, which indicates that they were not meant to stand upright, but hung as pectorals. As extremely small relief carvings that could not stand upright, it is difficult to imagine a purpose for these carved gemstones other than being worn as *enkolpia.*

When worn as *enkolpia*, carved gemstones functioned as private "icons" that were used to solicit the help, intercession, and patronage of a favorite holy figure. In order to understand the function of Byzantine carved gemstones as private "icons," or *enkolpia,* several types of textual sources may be consulted. They include wills and monastic inventories, historical texts, and poems. The challenge in using texts to investigate the way in which Byzantine carved gemstones were used in a devotional context lies in the fact that Byzantine sources that mention *enkolpia* and small personal icons often do not specify the object's material or describe it in

[4] The average and median are calculated from the dimensions of 161 gems. Measurements are not available for all of the two hundred gems that were included in this study. These measurements do not include the serpentine roundel of the Virgin in the Victoria and Albert Museum, which measures 17.6 cm, or the lapis lazuli plaque with Christ Standing in the Kremlin Museum, which measures 11.8 cm, because they are significantly larger than the others. On the serpentine roundel, see Buckton, *Byzantium: Treasures of Byzantine Art and Culture in British Collections*, 158, no. 171. On the lapis lazuli plaque in the Kremlin Museum see Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 122, no. 635.

detail. For example, in his article on the patriarchal inventory of the Church of Hagia Sophia, Paul Heatherington noted with surprise that the authors of the inventory only specified the medium of an icon in one instance. Otherwise, they typically specified the subject matter of the icon and, occasionally, details about its adornment and whether it was ever in the possession of an important person.[5] Similarly, in poems written on the topic of *enkolpia* and other small devotional icons, the holy figure portrayed is always identified but the material of the object is not always specified.

Maria Parani, who surveyed two-hundred and one legal documents in search of information about Byzantine realia, found that *enkolpia* were mentioned fourteen times. Of the documents that mention *enkolpia*, the material was specified in several cases when it was enamel or a precious metal. It was also noted when an *enkolpion* contained a relic and when it was decorated with costly material such as precious metal or gemstones.[6] Only three of the fourteen *enkolpia* could have been carved gemstones, and in two of the three cases the descriptions are not specific enough to conclude this with certainty. The one *enkolpion* that was specified to be a carved gemstone is a rock crystal cross in the inventory of the Great Lavra of Mt. Athos.[7] It was not mentioned whether this cross was carved with figural imagery, like those carved gemstones that are included in this study. Another *enkolpion* mentioned in the inventory of the Panteleimon Monastery that might have been a carved gemstone is described as a "bronze *enkolpion* having

[5] Paul Heatherington, "The perception of icons in the late Byzantine world: some evidence in a treasury inventory of Hagia Sophia," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 102.1 (2009): 99-101.

[6] Parani, "Byzantine Jewelry: The Evidence from Legal Documents," 187.

[7] Ibid. Parani interpreted "σταυρὴν κροίων" as a cross of rock crystal because the word κροίων could be a misspelling of κρύον, or rock crystal. For the full Greek text see Lavra I, no. 22, reference 167.17 in Ludovic Bender et. al., "Artefacts and Raw Materials in Byzantine Archival Documents / Objets et matériaux dans les documents d'archives byzantins," accessed December 2, 2014, http://www.unifr.ch/go/typika.

within it a precious stone and precious wood bound with gilded silver."[8] From this description, it is not possible to know whether the precious stone was a relic, whether it was carved with a holy image, or whether it had simply been enclosed within the *enkolpion* because of its own value and inherent properties. The last *enkolpion* that could have been a carved gemstone is one in the inventory of the Patmos Monastery, which dates to the year 1200. The material is not listed, but it is described as a "small *enkolpion* of the *Koimesis*."[9] The possibility that this *enkolpion* could have been a carved gemstone can be entertained because its material is not specified and because there is, in fact, a chrysoprase *enkolpion* carved with an image of the *Koimesis* in the Kremlin Museum (no. 148).[10] The provenance for the chrysoprase carving of the *Koimesis* extends back to the sixteenth century, when a source records that it was sent from Patriarch Sophronius IV of Jerusalem to Tsar Fedor Ioannovic.[11] It is possible that it could have been the *enkolpion* mentioned in the inventory of the Patmos Monastery, although this cannot be proven.

The survey of entries in wills and inventories in which *enkolpia* are recorded illustrates the difficulty of finding textual sources which specify whether an *enkolpion* or a small, personal icon is a carved gemstone. It is unclear whether the material of carved gemstone was rarely mentioned because it was not deemed worthy of specifying or because there were few in the possession of the individuals and monasteries whose legal documents have survived. Since

[8] "ἐγκόλπιον χαλκὸν ἔχον ἔσωθεν λίθον τίμιον καὶ τίμιον ξύλον δὲδὲμένον ἀργυρὸν διἄχρυσον." Panteleemon, no. 7, reference 74.17. From Ludovic Bender et. al., "Artefacts and Raw Materials in Byzantine Archival Documents / Objets et matériaux dans les documents d'archives byzantins," accessed December 2, 2014, http://www.unifr.ch/go/typika.

[9] Parani, "Byzantine Jewelry: The Evidence from Legal Documents," 187. "ἕτερον μικρὸν ἐγκόλπιον ἡ Κοίμησις." For the Greek text see Patmos Inventory, reference 21.17, in Ludovic Bender et. al., "Artefacts and Raw Materials in Byzantine Archival Documents / Objets et matériaux dans les documents d'archives byzantins," accessed December 2, 2014, http://www.unifr.ch/go/typika.

[10] Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 125, no. 646; Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 236-238n1, no. 41.

[11] Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 236-238n1, no. 41.

gemstones were luxury objects and the legal documents do specify when they adorned religious objects as decoration, the former possibility seems unlikely. It may be that when a gemstone was carved with the image of a holy figure, the identity of the holy figure became the most important aspect of the object and the most relevant detail to record in a will or inventory. Precious adornments such as metal casings or gemstones may have been noted as secondary details in order to indicate the monetary value of the object for the purpose of evaluating the worth of an estate or the assets of a monastery.

Textual sources that document the use of *enkolpia* indicate that they were highly personal objects that were used in private acts of devotion such as prayer and confession. Their physical nature and tactility were important aspects of their function, since they rested directly on the body and were handled manually when actively used in prayer. One source that describes the use of an *enkolpion* is the *Chronographia* of Niketas Choniates, which was written in the twelfth century. Choniates describes what must have been a stressful and dangerous moment in the life of Emperor Isaac II Angelos, when his brother Alexios deposed him in a coup. Isaac turned immediately to prayer, first crying out to Christ and God for mercy and then turning his attention to his *enkolpion.* Choniates wrote, "Pulling out his pectoral icon of the Mother of God, he embraced it many times, all the while confessing his sins and promising to make amends, and in anguish of heart he prayed to escape the impending evils."[12]

[12] "ἐξενεγκὼν δὲ καὶ ὃ εἶχεν ἐγκόλπιον τῆς θεομήτορος μόρφωμα πυκνὰ τοῦτο περιεπτύσσετο τὰ μὲν ἀνθομολογούμενος, τὰ δὲ καὶ ἐξιλεούμενος, καὶ μετὰ συνοχῆς ἐδεῖτο καρδίας διαδρᾶναι τὰ ἐπιόντα κακά." Nicetas Choniates, *Historia*, from TLG Thesaurus Linguae Graecae (University of California, Irvine, 2009), accessed January 21, 2015, http://www.tlg.uci.edu/. English translation from N. Choniates, *O City of Byzantium: Annals of Niketas Choniatēs*, ed. and trans. H. J. Magoulias (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1984), 247. Passage cited in Sheila D. Campbell and Anthony Cutler, "Enkolpion," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (Oxford University Press, 1991), accessed January 22, 2015, http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195046526.001.0001/acref-9780195046526-e-1673.

The passage in Choniates' *Chronographia* is useful for our understanding of the function of *enkolpia* for several reasons. Most immediately, it confirms that *enkolpia* were small, personal icons that were used to direct prayers to the holy figure portrayed. Having already issued brief prayers to Christ and God, the emperor used his *enkolpion* to pray to the Virgin. As the Mother of God, the Virgin was thought of as the most effective intercessor, and the emperor must have been especially devoted to her as she was the one portrayed on his *enkolpion.* From Choniates' account, the emperor's prayers to the Virgin were longer and more complex than the brief cries for mercy that he directed to God and Christ, and included the confession of sins, promises of making "amends," and pleas for deliverance.

The passage also sheds light upon how *enkolpia* were physically used in the act of prayer. Choinates relates that the emperor touched and handled the *enkolpion* while praying and confessing, first bringing it out (an indication that it was normally hidden beneath garments), and then clasping it (περιπτύσσω) while praying to the Virgin.[13] This passage indicates how important the physicality and small size of *enkolpia* were to their function as personal "icons." One could interact in a more intimate way with a small icon that could be clasped within the palm of the hand than with a painted panel icon or a holy image in monumental mosaic. On this note, Choniates' passage also testifies to the emperor's close relationship with his *enkolpion*. The emperor alleviated his suffering and fear by embracing the *enkolpion* and using it to guide his prayers. One might argue that the emperor's close relationship was actually with the Virgin who was portrayed on the *enkolpion,* rather than with the *enkolpion* itself. As a physical object of personal significance, however, the *enkolpion* must have also given the emperor comfort in a

[13] The verb used, περιπτύσσω, means to clasp or embrace. Magoulias selected the word "embrace" in his translation of the passage, but given the small size of *enkolpia* the verb "clasp" is preferable. On the definition of περιπτύσσω see "περιπτύσσω" in Liddell and Scott, *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon*, 631.

time of distress. It served as a proxy for the Virgin just as much as it functioned as the means through which she could be reached with prayer.

The examination of the carved gemstones in this study confirms that they functioned in the same way as the *enkolpion* of Emperor Isaac II Angelos. Inscriptions that include the names of those who owned them confirm their personal nature. For example, the phrase, "Lord, help your servant John" is inscribed on the bloodstone of Christ Pantokrator in the Ortiz Collection (no. 122).[14] This inscription also functions as a prayer. A total of five gemstones in this study are inscribed with prayers, most of which take the form of brief pleas for help or salvation. In addition to the prayer on the Ortiz bloodstone, the prayers inscribed onto Byzantine gemstones have been listed below. The tenth-century bloodstone of Christ that belonged to Emperor Leo VI in the Victoria and Albert Museum is inscribed with the prayer, "Jesus save Leo the Despot" (no. 1).[15] The lost tenth-century sardonyx of the Virgin Orant, which also thought to have belonged to Emperor Leo VI, is inscribed with the words "Help Leo the Despot" (no. 2).[16] The eleventh-century serpentine roundel of Emperor Nikephoros III Botaniates is inscribed with the phrase "Theotokos help the Christ-loving Despot Nikephoros Botaniates" (no. 41).[17] Although the serpentine roundel was not small enough to be used as an *enkolpion*, its inscription still deserves mentioning because it demonstrates the personal nature of carved gemstones. The bloodstone of Christ the Merciful in the Hermitage is inscribed with a more complex prayer that reads, "Christ

[14] ΚΕ ΒΟΗΘ CΩ ΔΝ ΙΩ. See Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium,* 175, no. 127.

[15] ΙΗCΟΝ CΩCΟΝ ΛΕΟΝΤΑ ΔΕCΠΟ(την). On this carved bloodstone see Williamson*The Medieval Treasury: The Art of the Middle Ages in the Victoria and Albert Museum*, 86-87, b.

[16] Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 12-13. Inscription: ΚΕΒ ΛΕΟ ΤΙΔΕ CΠΟΤ

[17] Θ(εοτόκε) (Βοή)ΘΕΙ ΝΙΚΗΦΟΡΩ ΦΙΛΟΚΡΙCΤΩ ΔΕCΠΟ(τ)Η ΤΩ ΒΟΤΑΝΕΙΑΤΗ. See Buckton, *Byzantium: Treasures of Byzantine Art and Culture in British Collections*, 158, no. 171.

the Lord, he who hopes in you will not fail" (no. 23).[18] This prayer combines praise with a statement of faith and hope, with the request for assistance implied rather than implicitly stated. These inscribed prayers suggest that carved gemstones were used in the act of prayer, much like the *enkolpion* of Emperor Isaac II Angelos.

The use of Byzantine carved gemstones in prayer was one aspect of their larger purpose as objects that connected an individual with his or her patron saint, or favorite holy figure. This much is clear from the subject matter and iconography of carved gemstones, most of which are carved with a portrait image of a single holy figure. As demonstrated in Chapter Seven, the holy figures selected for representation are predominantly those who were considered most effective as intercessors or as protectors. Christ, the Savior, was represented the most often, followed by the Virgin, who was considered the most important intercessor for mankind because of her close relationship with Christ as his mother.[19] Another holy figure that was frequently represented on carved gemstones was St. John the Baptist, who, as Christ's Forerunner, was also thought to be a strong intercessor.[20] Other holy figures that appear frequently on Byzantine carved gemstones are the Archangel Michael and warrior saints, who were protectors as well as intercessors.

Most gemstones were carved with the image of only one holy figure, which strengthens the impression that they were primarily used to facilitate a devotional relationship with a patron saint. When two figures are paired they are often military saints, which in representations on other media are usually represented in groups. They are also sometimes holy figures whose

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[18] "Jesus Christ the Merciful": IC XC O ΕΛΕΗΜΩΝ. "Christ the Lord he who hopes in you will not fail": ΧΡΙCΤΕ Ο ΘΕΟC Ο ΕΙC CΕ ΕΛΠΙΖΩ ΟΥΚ ΑΠΟΤΥΓΧΑΝΕΙ. See Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 120, no. 634.

[19] On the Virgin as the most effective intercessor with Christ see Kalavrezou, "Images of the Mother: When the Virgin Mary became *Meter Theou*," 168-172.

[20] Mouriki, "A Deësis icon in the Art Museum," 14-16.

spiritual roles complemented one another or offered different strengths. For example, there are several double-sided gemstones carved on both sides with the image of Christ and the Virgin. On these gems, the Virgin has an intercessory role with Christ, who is the ultimate Savior. There are also several double-sided gems upon which the figure on the obverse is a strong intercessor, such as Christ or the Virgin, and the figure on the reverse is a protector such as a military saint. In the case of the bloodstone with the Virgin and St. Pantaleimon in the Kanellopoulos Museum, the figure on the reverse is a healer saint. The owners of these carved gemstones must have had two patron saints on whom they depended for different spiritual needs.

As noted in the discussion of Emperor Isaac II Komnenos' interaction with his *enkolpion*, the small size and physical nature of carved gemstones were also important to their function as devotional objects. Averaging 3.7 cm in height, almost all of the carved gemstones in this study were small enough to be held, and many could fit into the palm of the hand. When praying, the owners of carved gemstones would have clasped them in their hands and perhaps held them to the breast. The varied texture of the surface of a carved gemstone, with the contrast between uneven carved relief and a smoothly polished background, would have encouraged touching. So too would the solidity and durability of carved gemstones, which are not as fragile as *enkolpia* wrought in other types of precious material such as carved steatite and enamel. Many of the carved gemstones in this study show evidence of light wear, although it is impossible to know whether this represents traces of use from the Byzantine period or whether it stems from their continued use in the centuries that followed. For example, the facial features of the bloodstone of the Archangel Michael in the Cabinet des Médailles are worn so that they have become smooth.[21] The wear may have been caused by touching and holding, or, since the facial features

[21] On this gem see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 280, no. 189.

are in higher relief than most of the surrounding carving, they may have been rubbed down by the garments under which the gemstone *enkolpion* was worn. The tactile physicality of carved gemstones must have enhanced their efficacy as devotional objects by encouraging physical expressions of love and affection for the holy figures portrayed.

Choniates' passage demonstrated that the emperor had a close, emotional relationship with his *enkolpion* and that it was a source of comfort in a time of distress. The physical properties of carved gemstones suggest that they served a similar purpose when worn as *enkolpia.* Even when the owner of a gemstone *enkolpion* was not actively praying, he or she still had close physical contact with the *enkolpion* because it was worn beneath clothing, over the heart. Most of the carved gemstones in this study are heavy enough that their presence would have been felt when they were worn in that manner and some, like the large bloodstone with the image of the Crucifixion in the Victoria and Albert Museum, would have been quite heavy (no. 48).[22] The weight of carved gemstones meant that those who wore them were constantly aware of their presence and, therefore, of the presence of their patron saint. The physical feeling of the object must have been comforting, especially because gemstones have excellent thermal properties and retain heat.[23] When worn as pectorals, carved gemstones would have warmed nearly to body temperature. When removed from the breast and held in the hand, they would still be warm. The warmth of carved gemstones must have also enhanced the sense of the holy figure's presence, as well as the comforting feeling of wearing and handling the *enkolpion.*

[22] Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury,* 86-87 d.

[23] Gemstones have a high thermal inertia relative to other materials such as metal and glass, which means that it takes a relatively long time for their surface temperatures to change. They tend to be cool to touch, but once they have warmed, they tend to retain their heat. For a definition of thermal inertia and a chart that lists the thermal inertia of gemstones, glass, and metal, see D. B. Hoover, "The GEM DiamondMaster and the Thermal Properties of Gems," *Gems & Gemology* 19.2 (1983): 77-86.

The act of wearing a gemstone *enkolpion* must have in itself been an act of devotion. It was a way of carrying a favorite holy figure with oneself at all times, thereby demonstrating devotion and loyalty to that holy figure as well as ensuring their constant presence, help, and intercession. Poems written about *enkolpia* also demonstrate that wearing a pectoral with an image of a holy figure "over the heart" was a significant act of devotion because the heart is the site of love and desire. The reference to the heart appears, for example, in a poem written about an *enkolpion* of the Virgin, which opens with the statement, "I have you (carved) on the plaques of the heart, Virgin, just as the plaque was carved with the word of God."[24] The poem implies that wearing an *enkolpion* of the Virgin over one's heart was almost like having her incised directly on the heart itself.

A similar sentiment appears in an epigram written by Theodore Balsamon on an *enkoklpion* of St. Theodore Stratelates, which in Chapter Seven I argued was probably a carving of bloodstone. The first line of the poem reads, "A fire of flashing desire is in my heart for a stone heart of sparking material."[25] This phrase connects the supplicant's love and desire for St. Theodore with the positioning of the *enkolpion* with the saint's image directly over the supplicant's heart. The saint's presence over the supplicant's heart inspires the devotional feelings and connects them directly to the saint, as the heart is where these feelings arise.

Another text that demonstrates the important role of *enkolpia* in mediating the relationship between individuals and their patron saints is the typikon of the Monastery of the Virgin Kosmosoteira, which contains instructions for the burial of Sebastokrator Isaac

[24] "Εν καρδίας ἔχων σε πλαξὶ, Παρθένε, Θεοῦ λόγον πλὰξ ὥσπερ ἐγγεγλυμμένην…" Lampros, "Ho Markianos kodix 524," 22, no. 54.

[25] Ἐγκάρδιον πῦρ ἀστραπηφόρου πόθου πρὸς καρδίαν λίθινον ἐκψπινθηρίσας. Horna, "Die Epigramme des Theodore Balsamon,"189, poem XXIV A.

Komnenos.[26] As the third son of Emperor Alexios I Komnenos, Isaac never reached the position of emperor himself. His older brother, Emperor John II Komnenos, honored him with the high title of *Sebastokrator,* but later exiled him for the rest of his life. As a result, Isaac Komnenos had to draw up new plans to be buried in exile instead of at the Church of the Chora in Constantinople, as he had originally planned. Isaac left detailed instructions for the construction of his tomb and the decoration and arrangement of the interior elements. Among the instructions, Isaac Komnenos wrote that he wanted his *enkolpion* with the image of the Virgin buried with him. He specified that it should be placed within a silver frame and attached to the lid of his tomb in a "prone" position.[27] In all likelihood, the *enkolpion* would have been positioned directly over his heart. The fact that Isaac Komnenos wanted to take his *enkolpion* with him, literally, to the grave, demonstrates the attachment that he must have felt to the object and his belief in its important role in facilitating his relationship with the Virgin. He must have hoped that the presence of the *enkolpion* on his tomb would encourage the Virgin's intercession and protection at the time of death, when he needed the Virgin's help and guidance the most.

While the account of Isaac Komnenos' burial arrangements suggest that gemstone *enkolpia* must have had some function in a funerary context and may have occasionally been buried, the burial of gemstones was not a common practice. The sixth-century law code of Justinian prohibits the burial of gemstones because of their high value, and the fact that no carved gemstones have been found in excavated Byzantine tombs suggests that a cultural

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[26] N. P. Ševčenko, The Tomb of Isaak Komnenos at Pherrai, *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 29.2 (1980): 135-139.

[27] Ibid., 137 (for the directions regarding the *enkolpion*) and 135-139 (for the full account of Isaac's instructions regarding his burial). Sevcenko notes in footnotes seven and eight that the word "engraved" is used in the instructions of how the *enkolpion* should be attached to the tomb, and she translates the word to "fastened," the most logical choice since it is difficult to imagine how an *enkolpion* could be literally engraved upon the lid of a tomb.

aversion to burying gemstones existed throughout the Byzantine period.[28] Instead, Byzantine carved gemstones were more often bequeathed to monasteries, relatives, or close friends. A significant number of gemstone *enkolpia* survive to this day in the Vatopedi and Chilandar monasteries of Mt. Athos.[29] They may have been donated as votive offerings in final acts of devotion. Twentieth-century accounts relate that in Orthodox monasteries *enkolpia* and pectoral crosses were hung from liturgical textiles called *podeai*, and there is some evidence from monastic inventories that the practice could have existed in Byzantine times as well.[30] The fact that carved gemstones that date to as early as the tenth century continued to circulate around Eastern and Western Europe throughout the medieval and early modern periods also indicates that gemstone *enkolpia* were not always donated to monasteries, and must have also been passed down to family members or bequeathed to close friends or spiritual advisors. The will of a nun named Maria indicates that she bequeathed her *enkolpia* instead of donating them to a monastery. Maria owned two *enkolpia* and gave both of them to monks at the time of her death.[31]

[28] On the law code of Justinian on gemstones see Eleutheria Avgoloupi, *Simbologia delle gemme imperiali bizantine nella tradizione simbolica mediterranea delle pietre preziose (secoli I-XV d.C.)* (Spoleto: Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull'alto Medioevo, 2013), 2.

[29] Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 42-97; Popovich, "An examination of the Chilandar cameos," 7-49.

[30] Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 13.

[31] Parani, "Byzantine Jewelry: The Evidence from Legal Documents," 187.

Materiality

The preceding discussion has described the ways in which *enkolpia* were used in the context of private devotion in Byzantium. It was demonstrated that, like *enkolpia* made from other materials, gemstone *enkolpia* functioned as objects that mediated the devotional relationship between the supplicant and their patron saint and allowed the supplicant to carry the presence of their patron saint with them at all times. In order to illuminate the role of *enkolpia* in personal devotion to the fullest extent, the discussion did not focus exclusively upon gemstone *enkolpia*. If the first part of this chapter can be characterized as a broad overview of the function of *enkolpia*, the goal of the second part of the chapter is to narrow the focus specifically upon the material of gemstone and its role in the function and reception of gemstone *enkolpia* and devotional icons.

In Byzantium, *enkolpia* were made from materials of many types that ranged from the relatively humble materials of bronze and lead to valuable materials such as enamel, precious metal, and gemstone.[32] Since *enkolpia* were personal objects that were usually not displayed outwardly, like jewelry, it is important to ask why some individuals chose to have theirs made out of costly gemstones that required considerable skill and effort to carve. In other words, if the same object with the same holy image could be could be made with less expense in a different material, why did some chose the valuable material of gemstone for their *enkolpia*? A related line of inquiry concerns the role of the material of gemstone in the function and reception of gemstone *enkolpia*. Specifically, it will be asked how the meanings and associations held by

[32] Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 13-18 and 29-110; Brititte Pitarakis, "Objects of Protection and Devotion," in *Byzantine Christianity*, ed. Derek Krueger (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), 164-181; Kartsonis, "Protection against All Evil – Function, Use, and Operation of Byzantine Historiated Phylacteries," 86-90.

gemstones enhanced the efficacy of gemstone *enkolpia* as devotional objects and whether they influenced the pairing of certain types of gemstones with certain holy figures.

The remainder of this chapter is devoted to answering the questions stated above through an examination of the materiality of carved gemstones. It will first be demonstrated that gemstones were chosen as the material for *enkolpia* primarily because of their high value and prestige, which honored the holy figures portrayed upon them and made the *enkolpia* appropriate as "gifts" that were given in exchange for the holy figure's patronage. Then, the question of how specific types of gemstones were paired with subject matter will be addressed with the finding that there is almost no correlation between subject matter and gemstone type. Based upon a review of Greek texts about gemstones, I believe that this finding does not indicate that the symbolic and allegorical meanings of gemstones was insignificant, but rather that there was no fixed and universally understood system of meaning for gemstones. The meaning held by gemstones was flexible, multivalent, and contingent, with the result that most types of gemstones could be paired with most holy figures. Finally, poems written on the topic of icons and *enkolpia* in stone and gemstone will be examined in order to understand the ways in which the materials of stone and gemstone were perceived in a devotional context.

The British archaeologist, Christopher Tilley, has defined the study of materiality as an "attempt to develop a general theoretical and conceptual perspective or a theory of material culture in a material world."[33] To paraphrase his longer explanation of what this means, materiality is the study of the cultural perception of materials and the contingent nature of this perception, the relationship between people, objects, and materials, and the properties of

[33] Tilley, "Materiality in Materials," 20.

materials that are especially appreciated.[34] In Byzantine art history, studies on materiality have examined the Byzantine appreciation of materials, the associations that different materials evoked, and the role of materials in the perception and reception of works of art.[35]

Tilley's observation that the cultural perception of materials is contingent in nature holds true for the perception of gemstones in Byzantium. Gemstones held a range of meanings and associations that varied depending upon the identity and beliefs of the viewer and the contexts in which gemstones were used. At the most essential level, gemstones were rare, expensive objects that were controlled by the state. Their high cost as well as rules of propriety restricted their ownership to members of the upper classes. The sale of gemstones and other costly materials such as purple silk and precious metals was regulated by law. In the sixth century, Emperor Justinian issued a law that limited the display of hyacinths, emeralds, and pearls on belts and the bridals and saddles of horses to the emperor and prohibited the burial of gemstones and precious metals in tombs. In the tenth century, the Book of the Eparch set forth laws regarding the sale of gemstones and precious metals, both to regulate the trade of the goldsmiths and to prevent the loss of capital to foreigners.[36]

The ownership of gemstones was, therefore, considered the prerogative of the emperor, and gemstones came to be seen as symbols of imperial power. The association of gemstones with the emperor was widespread and deeply engrained in society. This is demonstrated, for

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[34] Ibid., 20.

[35] Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 79-85; Barry, "Walking on Water: Cosmic Floors in Antiquity and the Middle Ages," 627-656; Pentcheva, "The Performative Icon," 631-655; Pentcheva, *The Sensual Icon,* 1-16 and passim.

[36] Avgoloupi, *Simbologia delle gemme imperiali bizantine*, 1-4; Cyril Mango, *The Oxford History of Byzantium* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 60; Freshfield, *Roman Law in the Later Roman Empire,* 10-12.

example, by the entry on gemstones in the *Oneirocriticon of Achmet,* a book on dream-interpretation that dates to the late ninth or tenth century. The text relates, "If the emperor dreams that he was brought gems and pearls, he will receive joy commensurate to their number. If someone else dreams that he received such things, he will find commensurate wealth and glory and death from the emperor, for such things are appropriate for the emperor alone."[37]

The association of gemstones with the emperor was propagated in a variety of ways. Most visibly, gemstones were prominently displayed on imperial costume and regalia. Even those who rarely saw the emperor would have been familiar with his costume and regalia through imperial portraits on manuscript frontispieces, monumental mosaics, coins, and seals.[38] The emperor also exercised his right to gemstones and precious materials by bestowing gem-studded imperial regalia as gifts to dignitaries and foreign allies. In addition to functioning as an exchange of capital, the generosity and monetary value of the emperor's gifts served to demonstrate his great wealth and his superiority over those who received the gifts.[39]

It can be argued, therefore, that when a gemstone *enkolpion* belonged to an emperor or to a member of the imperial family, the choice of gemstone as a material for the *enkolpion* was influenced by its association with imperial power. In fact, there are two textual sources that describe gemstone *enkolpia* as symbols of imperial power. The first is Gunther of Pairis' description of an imperial *enkolpion* set with carved gemstones that Philip of Swabia took from

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[37] Mavroudi, *A Byzantine Book on Dream Interpretation,* 433.

[38] Avgoloupi, *Simbologia delle gemme imperiali byzantine*, 265-308; Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images,* 11-50.

[39] Cutler, "Gifts and Gift Exchange as Aspects of the Byzantine, Arab, and Related Economies," 247-278, esp. 248-255; Mango and Mango, "Cameos in Byzantium," footnote 69. On the exchange of relics as gifts, see Holger Klein, "Eastern Objects and Western Desires: Relics and Reliquaries between Byzantium and the West," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 58 (2004): 284-314.

Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade. The imperial *enkolpion* must have been considerably large, for it is described as a tablet that contained relics, gold, and decorative gemstones, as well as a jasper of "amazing size" carved with the image of the Crucifixion and a sapphire of "amazing weight" that was carved with an image of the Majesty of God. Gunther of Pairis also described the function of the *enkolpion*, writing that "On solemn feast days the emperor of the Greeks used to wear this tablet on a golden chain hanging from his neck, as a sort of indisputable token of his imperial power."[40] Gunther's account demonstrates that, at least on feast days, the emperor wore his gemstone *enkolpion* on display instead of hidden beneath garments, as was the more common practice. As a jewel encrusted symbol of imperial power that was worn in a ceremonial context, the emperor's gemstone *enkolpion* functioned as a piece of imperial regalia.

The other text in which an imperial gemstone *enkolpion* is described is the chronicle written by Niketas Choniates, which records the capture and recovery of the gemstone crucifix of Emperor Romanos Diogenes. The author wrote that Emperor John Komnenos lifted his siege upon the Seljuk city of Shaizar only after receiving, among other gifts, the gemstone crucifix of Emperor Romanos Diogenes. The gemstone crucifix, which was carved with the image of the crucified Christ, had been taken in the eleventh century by the Seljuks when they defeated Emperor Romanos Diogenes at the Battle of Manzikert.[41] The fact that the gemstone *enkolpion* had been held by the Seljuks for a century testifies to its significance as a symbol of the imperial power of the Byzantine emperor. Further, the fact that the story of the gemstone crucifix'

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[40] Gunther of Pairis, *The Capture of Constantinople,* 130. Cited in Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 14.

[41] "ἔφασκον δὲ οἱ κατὰ τὸ Σέζερ Σαρακηνοὶ πάλαι ποτὲ τοὺς προγόνους αὐτῶν ἐκ τῶν προσενεχθέντων δώρων τῷ Βασιλεῖ δορύκτητα σκεῖν τόν τε ἐκ λίθου ἀκτινώδους σταυρὸν καὶ τὴν πολυτελῆ καὶ οἵαν ἐκπλῆξαι τράπεζαν…" Nicetas Choniates, *Grandezza e catastrofe di Bisanzio,* 72. Passage cited and translated in Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 195 and 224.

capture and recovery is framed as symbolic of the Byzantine victory over the Seljuks indicates that, like the gemstone *enkolpion* described by Gunther of Pairis, it also functioned as imperial regalia, and even like an imperial talisman.

The function of gemstone *enkokpia* as imperial regalia should be distinguished from their function as devotional objects. In the particular contexts in which they were worn outwardly by the emperor as a display of wealth and piety, they honored the emperor more than they honored the holy figures represented. Of course, the emperors probably used the same *enkolpia* in private devotional rituals such as prayer, and in those contexts the costly gemstones would have served to propitiate the holy figures by showing honor to them through the value of the materials in which their images were portrayed.

The function of imperial gemstone *enkolpia* as symbols of imperial power is related to the custom by which the emperor's *enkolpion* served as a guarantee of imperial protection. *Enkolpia* that were given for protection were usually, but not exclusively, cruciform reliquaries with particles of the True Cross.[42] For example, in the *Alexiade,* Anna Komnena described an instance in which a woman seeking immunity demanded the emperor's cross-shaped *enkolpion* as a guarantee of safety. She had been offered the pectoral cross of a guard, but she rejected it because it was too small and, since it only belonged to a lowly guard, she knew that it could not legitimately guarantee her safety.[43] As another example, when the Russian Archimandrite Pimen visited Constantinople in the fourteenth century, the emperor gave him his own *enkolpion* to "keep him from harm."[44] The material and form of this *enkolpion* are not known. When the

[42] Kartsonis, "Protection against all Evil," 81-83.

[43] Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad of Anna Comnena*, trans. E. R. A. Sewter (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1969), 85.

[44] Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 20.

emperor's *enkolpion* was used as a guarantee of protection, it served as a proxy for him and for his authority.

Returning to Christopher Tilley's assertion that there are contingencies in the cultural perception of materials, while the emperors and other wealthy elites had long appreciated gemstones because of their high value and prestige, it is possible that some monastics and churchmen perceived them negatively or, at least, with ambivalence. This is because gemstones were not held in high regard among the Church Fathers who were the most influential in the Orthodox Christian tradition. In their writings, gemstones appear in three contexts. The first context in which gemstones appear in the commentaries of the Church Fathers is in references to biblical passages in which gemstones are mentioned.[45] Gemstones are mentioned in several books of the bible, among them Exodus, Ezekial, and the Apocalypse. The passage on gemstones in Exodus is discussed in detail in Chapter Ten, so here it will suffice to state that the gemstones are mentioned in the context of discussing the liturgical vestments of the High Priest of Israel (Exodus 28: 6-30). In Ezekial, gemstones are part of Ezekial's vision of God; the wheels beneath the cherubim appeared like topaz and the throne of God was a lapis lazuli (Ezekial 1:15-28). Later in the Book of Ezekial, gemstones are said to adorn the garments of the King of Tyre when he dwelt in the Garden of Eden prior to being expelled by God because of his sins (Ezekial 28:13). In the Apocalypse, gemstones are used to describe the Throne of Heaven and the one seated upon (Revelations 4:3). Further in the same text, it is written that the walls of the heavenly city of Jerusalem are made of precious stones, while the streets are paved in gold.

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[45] See, for example, John Chrysostom's brief reference to the gems of the heavenly city as described in Revelations in John Chrysostom, *The Homilies of S. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, on the Epistles of St. Paul the Apostle to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians,* trans. Sir George Prevost (Oxford: J.H. Parker, 1843), 140, Homily 12.

(Revelations 21:15-21). In the Book of Exodus, gemstones have a functional purpose as objects that were used in religious rites, but in Ezekial and the Apocalypse they have a symbolic and eschatological significance.[46]

In the second context in which gemstones appear in the writings of the Church Fathers of Orthodox Christianity, they are disparaged as worthless symbols of vanity that can be associated with women. The roots of this belief are in the writings of the Apostle Paul, in which he urged Christian women to dress modestly. Although Paul did not specifically mention gemstones, his recommendation to avoid wearing gold and pearls must have been interpreted to mean that precious adornments of all types should be discouraged (1Timothy 2:9-10; 1 Peter 3:1-4).[47] The idea that gemstones are worthless material objects that can be associated with the foolishness of women appears in the writings of John Chrysostom in *Baptismal Instructions* and Basil the Great of Caesarea in "On the Sermon to the Rich." John Chrysostom paraphrased Paul's recommendation that women adorn themselves with "piety and modesty" instead of with gemstones. He also wrote that even ordinary stones should be held above gemstones because they could at least be used in building, while gemstones were not only useless, but also sinful. He wrote, "You show me what benefit could come from precious stones; rather, show me what harm could not come from them! That you may wear a single ruby, countless poor are starved and crushed. What defense will you find against this charge? And what pardon?"[48] Chrysostom echoed the sentiment that gemstones were simply useless in his tenth homily on the epistles of

[46] On the theological significance of the gemstones mentioned in Exodus, Ezekial, and Revelations see Una Jart, "Precious Stones in the Revelation of St. John 21: 18-21," *Studia Theologica* 23/24 (1969/1970): 150-181.

[47] Avgoloupi, *Simbologia delle gemme imperiali byzantine,* 1-4.

[48] John Chrysostom, *Baptismal Instructions*, trans. Paul W. Harkins (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1963), 185-186.

St. Paul. He reminded his flock that it was easier for a camel to fit through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter heaven, and went on to say that ordinary stones could at least be used in building, while the value of gemstones is simply a construct made up by man's foolish perceptions.[49] In a similar manner, in "On the Sermon to the Rich," Basil the Great of Caesarea pointed out that gemstones were merely stones and that, like other forms of wealth, they led directly to sin.[50]

In the third context in which gemstones appear in the writings of Church fathers of Orthodox Christianity, they are used in comparisons to demonstrate the value of spiritual goods or concepts such as salvation. For example, in his twelfth homily on the epistles of St. Paul, Chrysostom declared that admittance to heaven was a much better prize than the gemstones of the Heavenly City, which may as well be bricks in comparison.[51] In another homily, Chrysostom wrote that Christ's teachings were more precious than gemstones, referencing Christ's orders against casting pearls before swine.[52] As another example, Cyril of Jerusalem urged Christians taking communion to be as careful with the Eucharistic bread as they would with gold and gemstones, writing, "Wilt thou not then much more carefully keep watch, that not a crumb fall

[49] Chrysostom, *The Homilies of S. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, on the Epistles of St. Paul the Apostle to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians,* 124-127.

[50] Basil the Great, *Homilia in divites*, Section 7 line 4, from TLG Thesaurus Linguae Graecae (University of California, Irvine, 2009), accessed January 21, 2015, http://www.tlg.uci.edu/. English translation at Dacy R. Boyd, *Translation of Homilia in divites by Basil of Caesarea with Annotation and Dating* (Ph.D. diss., Temple University, 2014), 153-163.

[51] Chrysostom, *The Homilies of S. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, on the Epistles of St. Paul the Apostle to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians,* 140.

[52] John Chrysostom, *The Homilies of S. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, on the Gospel of St. John,* 5.

from thee of what is more precious than gold and precious stones?"[53] The trope, according to which spiritual goods are held as superior to precious materials, comes from the bible and is echoed in hagiography. For example, in Psalm 19:9-10, the decrees of the Lord are said to be more precious than gold. In the *vita* of Polycarp, which was written in the second century, the martyr's bones are said to be more precious than gemstones.[54]

The Orthodox Church Fathers' negative views about gemstones must have lingered to some extent in the Byzantine period, especially among ascetics and those with more conservative beliefs. It is, however, difficult to determine their scope and the extent to which they influenced the perception of carved gemstones. For example, the prevalence of precious materials in Byzantine church decoration, furnishing, and liturgical implements indicates that a taste for luxury items existed among the leaders of the Church. Further, some of the carved gemstones in this study, especially those carved with images of the Virgin, Apostle saints, and St. Basil, are very likely to have belonged to Church officials. The two bloodstones in the Ortiz Collection and the Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel that are carved with a patriarchal cross on the reverse probably did as well (nos. 122, 123).[55] Given the fact that high-ranking Church officials were often drawn from the upper classes, as well as the aristocratic tradition of retiring to a monastery, it is impossible to determine the extent to which views about gemstones that were held by Byzantine churchmen and monastics were different than those held by members of the upper classes and the imperial family.

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[53] Cyril of Jerusalem, "On the Sacred Liturgy and Communion," in *Cyril of Jerusalem, Gregory of Nazianzen,* ed. and trans. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994), 156.

[54] Buettner, "From Bones to Stones: Reflections on Jeweled Reliquaries," 43-44.

[55] On the gem in the Ortiz Collection see Evans and Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium,* 175, no. 127. On the gem in Kassel see Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel" 90, no. 85.

In summary, gemstones were associated with wealth, prestige, and imperial power. On the one hand, these attributes made gemstones appeal to wealthy individuals and members of the imperial family. On the other hand, these attributes associated gemstones with vanity and materialism, which led the Orthodox Church Fathers to set them in opposition to spiritual assets and virtues. The wealthy individuals who owned gemstone *enkolpia* acknowledged that precious materials could never be as valuable as spiritual assets, but reasoned that it was only with the best and most costly materials that they could honor immaterial beings in the material realm. They selected gemstones as the material for their *enkolpia* because the gemstones' high value and prestige honored the holy figures that were represented upon them and allowed the *enkolpia* to function as "gifts" for the holy figures. In return for offering the costly material of gemstone as a gift to their patron saint, a supplicant would expect the patron saint to give spiritual gifts such as intercession, salvation, and protection against temptation.

This theory is inspired by the work of Titos Papamastorikas on luxury icons.[56] Papamastorikas demonstrated that wealthy individuals commissioned icons adorned with precious metals and gemstones because costly and precious materials were considered appropriate offerings to the holy figures that dwelt in the immaterial realm. The costly materials that decorated luxury icons were considered "gifts" for the holy figures portrayed, and in return, the holy figures were expected to give spiritual support and assistance with attaining salvation. Poems written about these luxury icons express the idea that although material objects could never be as worthy as the spiritual gifts offered by the holy figure, the supplicant is offering the

[56] Titos Papamastorakis, "The Display of Accumulated Wealth in Luxury Icons: Gift-Giving from the Byzantine Aristocracy to God in the Twelfth Century," in *Byzantine Icons: Art, Technique and Technology*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Heraklion: Panepistemiakes Ekdoseis Kretes, 2002), 35-47.

best and most precious materials that he or she can anyway in the hopes that they will be accepted.[57]

My hypothesis is that a gemstone's value and prestige were the primary reasons that it was chosen as the material for an *enkolpion,* and that this was motivated by the belief in the efficacy of precious and costly materials as devotional offerings to patron saints. When an individual's rank and wealth permitted access to precious materials, giving a costly "gift" to a patron saint in the form of a gemstone icon or *enkolpion* with their image was not only an effective way to show devotion and solicit future assistance, but also a clear way of demonstrating appreciation for the saint's blessings and support. The sacrificial and reciprocal aspects of using a gemstone as the material for an *enkolpion* are expressed, for example, in the poem on an icon of St. Theodore that was discussed in Chapter Seven. Certain metaphors in the text suggest that the icon was an *enkolpion* of bloodstone.[58] The poem is written in the first person from the perspective of the object's owner. Alluding to wealth of both a material and a spiritual kind, the poem states that the owner was "rich" (ἐπλούτησά) and then questions how he could ever repay St. Theodore for his patronage and assistance. The poem alludes to the difficulty in sharing wealth, noting that the hand "trembles uselessly in giving" (δοῦναι δέ τι δύσχρηστος ἐστὶ καὶ τρέμει), in order to emphasize the sacrificial nature of the "gift" of the costly material that was used in the creation of the saint's icon. The poem then states that in order to show his gratefulness to his patron saint, the owner has woven a silver-gilt thread for

[57] Ibid., 35-42. For example, see page 40 for a poem written for an icon of Christ that was commissioned by Maria, consort of Manuel Komnenos. The poem bemoans the fact that nothing could possibly compare with the gifts given by Christ, so the icon is being decorated with gold as a comparatively small token of faith.

[58] Horna, "Die Epigramme des Theodore Balsamon," 189, poem XXIV A. See full translation and discussion in Chapter Seven.

him (ἀργυροχρυσόμικτον ὑφάνας κρόκην). The silver gilt-thread probably refers to a metal chain that was added to the *enkolpion* to replace a simple cord as the device for suspending the object as a pendant. Finally, the poem ends with a request for continued assistance in return for the gift of the silver-gilt thread, with the words, "Otherwise, in return for this, hand over to me once again deliverance from temptation as a debt bearing interest" (ἀλλ' ἀντὶ τούτου καὶ πὰλιν πάρασχέ μοιπειρασμολυτήριον ἔντοκον χρέος).[59] In this poem, the "gift" is the silver-gilt thread and not the material of gemstone. Nonetheless, the poem serves as a useful example of the expectations surrounding the use of precious materials for *enkolpia* and demonstrates that the valuable materials were not, at least purportedly, intended for the enjoyment of the object's owner, but rather to honor and propitiate the holy figure portrayed on the object.

My hypothesis that the high value and prestige of gemstones were usually the primary factors that influenced their selection as the material for *enkolpia* is based upon the fact that there is no strict correlation between a gemstone type and the holy figure portrayed. This finding, which was drawn from examining the two-hundred carved gemstones in this study together and looking for patterns by gemstone type, runs contrary to my original expectation that certain types of gemstones would be consistently paired with certain holy figures based upon their symbolic and metaphorical meanings. What I found instead was that no single type of gemstone was used exclusively for any one holy figure, and no holy figure was represented exclusively in one type of gemstone. Gemstones that were generally very popular for carving in Byzantium, such as bloodstone and other varieties of jasper, were used for the representation of almost every type of holy figure. Likewise, holy figures that were represented frequently on carved gemstones were represented on more types of gemstones. For example, Christ, who appears on sixty-one gems in

[59] Ibid., 189.

this study, accounting for thirty-one percent of the total, is represented on a total of ten different types of gemstones. St. Nicholas, who is represented on six gems in this study, accounting for only three percent of the total, is represented on four different types of gemstones.

These findings suggest that gemstones were not chosen for *enkolpia* based exclusively or even primarily upon any metaphorical and symbolic associations that they held with the holy figure portrayed upon the object. If the "meaning" held by a gemstone was not the primary reason that it was selected for an *enkolpion*, then the next likely explanation is that the gemstone was chosen because its value and prestige made it an appropriate material to honor and propitiate the patron saint represented upon it. According to this theory, a more valuable and rare type of gemstone might be selected over one that was more relevant to the holy figure in terms of its meaning if such a gemstone could be purchased by the owner of the *enkolpion.* This could explain why, among the carved gems in this study, rare and valuable semi-translucent stones are represented across most types of holy figures, and in many cases there is no discernable reason from the realm of metaphor and color symbolism that can explain why a particular gemstone is paired with a holy figure. For example, the globular red inclusions of the bloodstone make it easy to understand why it is frequently used for carvings of warrior saints, but it is more difficult to explain why warrior saints are also represented on carvings of purple amethyst and blue sapphire. The theory that the gemstone's value and prestige were the primary reasons for its use in *enkolpia* can explain the use of amethyst and sapphire for carvings of warrior saints, as these stones were more rare and costly than bloodstone, which is a variety of jasper. The owners of amethyst and sapphire carvings of warrior saints may have been wealthy individuals of a high status who had access to gemstones of a higher value. Their choice of the costlier stones would have honored their patron saints through the high value of the material and made their "gifts"

greater in terms of personal sacrifice. Such gifts would command greater reciprocation in the form of spiritual assistance, intercession, and help with attaining salvation.

Further evidence in support of the hypothesis that the value and prestige of gemstones and owner's level of access to materials were among the primary motivators for choosing gemstones as a material for *enkolpia* is that the most valuable material, lapis lazuli, was not solely reserved for carvings of Christ. This is what would be expected if gemstones were paired with holy figures based strictly upon their metaphorical significance and color symbolism, since the color blue was related to the divine nature of Christ and the lapis lazuli stone is associated with epiphanic visions of God in the bible.[60] In the vision of Moses and the elders in Exodus, God appeared to stand on a pavement of lapis lazuli (Exodus 24:9). In Ezekial's vision, God's throne was made of lapis lazuli (Ezekial 1:26). In addition to this, lapis lazuli was also associated with divinity in the Chaldean tradition; in the lapidary of Damigeron, lapis lazuli is said to be "extremely honored by God."[61] Given the lapis lazuli's association with God and its reputation as a stone that was especially pleasing to divinities, it would be expected that this gemstone would be exclusively reserved for carvings of Christ. An examination of the carved gemstones in this study indicates, however, that while lapis lazuli is associated with Christ to a certain extent, it was not exclusively reserved for his image; of the eight carvings of lapis lazuli, six are carved with the image of Christ and two are carved with the image of the Virgin. Although she holds the Christ child, the Virgin is the main subject on both of these carvings. This suggests that in addition to its metaphorical and cultural meanings, lapis lazuli was chosen for carving because of its high value and prestige as a material. Given its high cost and rarity,

[60] On the symbolism of the color blue in Byzantium see Liz James, *Light and Colour in Byzantine Art* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 106.

[61] Halleux and Schamp, *Les Lapidaires grecs*, 250.

access to lapis lazuli was limited, and those who commissioned personal icons and *enkolpia* from this material were themselves individuals of a high rank. They chose the best and most valuable gemstone material possible for honoring the two most important holy figures that could be represented in images, Christ and the Virgin.

I have interpreted the lack of strict correlation between gemstone type and subject matter as an indication that when a gemstone was chosen as the material for an *enkolpion,* its value and prestige were the most immediate factors that influenced its choice and that these factors often outweighed any allegorical and symbolic meanings that the material held. This is not to imply, however, that a gemstone's meaning and associations were considered unimportant, or that they had no bearing upon the function and reception of gemstone *enkolpia*. Instead, the lack of strict correlation between subject matter and gemstone type should be interpreted as an indication that there was no fixed or widespread system of meaning and symbolism that was attached to gemstones in Byzantium. In addition to the evidence of the carved gemstones themselves, this hypothesis is supported by Greek texts on the topic of gemstones, which indicate that a range of ideas existed about gemstones and that their meaning was not fixed, but multivalent and contingent.

Greek texts about gemstones include lapidaries, Christian allegorical texts, poetry, and the bible.[62] Lapidaries impart knowledge about gemstones that range from their natural properties and physical appearance to their applications in medicine, magic, and divination. They were one of the main sources that transmitted ideas about stones throughout the Mediterranean world, and as such they were significant of shaping the meaning of gemstones in

[62] For a discussion of the typology of Greek texts about gemstones, including the division of Christian allegorical texts as a separate category from the lapidary texts, see Halleux and Schamp, *Les Lapidaires grecs,* xiii-xxxiv.

Byzantium. The amuletic and medicinal properties of gemstones, as recorded and transmitted through the lapidaries, are part of their materiality and undoubtedly influenced the choice of gemstones as a material for *enkolpia.* For example, an individual with a specific medicinal issue related to blood might select a bloodstone for their *enkolpion*, even if they could afford a more rare and expensive stone. Since this chapter focuses upon the function of carved gemstones as devotional objects, however, the amuletic aspects of gemstone *enkolpia* will not be discussed. This discussion is reserved for Chapter Ten, in which the lapidary texts and their relationship to Byzantine carved gemstones are examined in detail.

The biblical references to gemstones were discussed already in the context of describing the perception of gemstones by the Orthodox Church Fathers. To those references that were already discussed, it should be added that two of the most prominent metaphors in the bible concern rock and stone. In the Old Testament, God is frequently referred to as a "rock," as he is in his title as "the Rock of Israel" (2 Samuel 23:3), in order to praise his attributes of faithfulness and strength.[63] The metaphor of the cornerstone appears in both the Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament, in addition to standing generally as a metaphor for a leader of the people, the cornerstone appears in Isaiah in a passage that relates that God himself placed the cornerstone at the corner (Isaiah 28:16). It also appears in a Psalm that relates that the rejected stone has become the cornerstone (Psalms 118:22). In the New Testament and in Christian exegesis, the cornerstone is interpreted as a reference to Christ. Christ, drawing upon Psalms 118, referred to himself as the cornerstone (Matthew 21:42), and the apostles Peter and Paul reinforced this metaphor by explaining that Christ was the cornerstone of the Church, while the

[63] McKenzie, "Rock," in *The Dictionary of the Bible* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995, originally published 1965), 744.

apostles and prophets were its foundation (1 Peter 2:4; Ephesians 2:20).[64] As discussed in Chapter Eight, the exegetical interpretation of Christ as the cornerstone extended to the interpretation of Daniel's vision of the rock cut from the mountain "not with human hands" (Daniel 2:34, 44-45). In the Orthodox tradition, the mountain represents the Virgin, the rock represents Christ, and the miraculous hewing of the rock from the mountain without human intervention represents the Incarnation.[65]

Another type of text in which metaphors are connected with stones and gemstones is the Christian allegorical text. In this type of text, which was inspired by the biblical passages discussed above, stones and gemstones are invested with meaning in a Christian context. Here, it is important to distinguish the allegorical traditions surrounding gemstones in Byzantium from those in the medieval West. In the medieval West, the biblical metaphors that related Christ, the apostles, and the prophets to the building stones of the Church were connected with the gemstones of the Heavenly City as described in Revelations. Out of this developed a metaphor in which the saints and their virtues were compared with gemstones. The saints, along with their virtues and good deeds, were said to adorn heaven just as gemstones adorned the material world. Although there did not exist a strict relationship between an individual gemstone and its meaning or identification with a particular saint, gemstones were widely understood as symbols of spiritual virtues and of the precious nature of the saints.[66] In Byzantium, in contrast, gemstones were not associated specifically with the saints and their virtues and it is not possible to identify

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[64] McKenzie, "Cornerstone," in *Dictionary of the Bible,* 152.

[65] See discussion and citations in Chapter Eight. The metaphor is discussed and connected to steatite carvings in Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 82.

[66] Buettner, "From Bones to Stones," 43-59 esp. 43-47; Christel Meier, *Gemma spiritalis: Methode und Gebrauch der Edelsteinallegorese vom frühen Christentum bis ins 18. Jahrhundert* (Munich: W. Fink, 1977), 71-89.

a single overarching theme that describes the way in which they were allegorized. Aside from the poems that were written about specific icons and *enkolpia* of carved gemstone, there are only two Greek texts in which gemstones are allegorized, the poem on Temperance, or *Sophrosyne,* by Theodore Meliteniotes and *De Gemmis,* by Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis. Both texts are very much in the lapidary tradition and neither relates gemstones to saints or their virtues.

Meliteniotes' poem, written in the fourteenth century, is about the personification of Temperance. Gemstones appear in the poem in the context of the description of the bed of Temperance, which is said to be adorned by gemstones. In terms of their allegorical significance, the gemstones represent, in a paradoxical manner, the value of moderation and restraint, which are the hallmarks of the virtue of Temperance. The poem does not, however, assign allegorical significance or virtues to any of the individual gemstones. Instead, the list of stones reads like an abridged lapidary catalogue, with a group of the most well known stones such as sapphire, carbuncle, and emerald listed first and the remaining stones listed in alphabetical order.[67]

The other Greek text on gemstones that is considered a Christian allegorical text is Epiphanius' *De Gemmis.* This text was written in the fourth century and survives today in a Georgian version as well as in Latin and Armenian fragments.[68] It blends Christian metaphors and exegesis with lapidary lore, and in that respect it can also be considered a Christian lapidary.

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[67] M. Miller, ed. "Poème allégorique de Meliténiote, publié, d'après un manuscript de la Bibliothèque impériale," in *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque impériale et autres bibliothèques,* vol. 19, part 2. (Paris: L'Institut Impérial de France, 1858), 59-65. Text cited and described in Ronnie Terpening, "The Lapidary of L'Intelligenza: Its Literary Background," *Neophilologus* 60 (1976): 80.

[68] Epiphanius, *Epiphanius de gemmis;* Stone, "An Armenian Epitome of Epiphanius's 'De Gemmis,'" 467-476. Epiphanius' *De Gemmis* is identified as an important text about stones from the Christian allegorical tradition in Halleux and Schamp, *Les Lapidaires grecs*, xxxi-xxxii; Terpening, "The Lapidary of L'Intelligenza," 79; Meier, *Gemma spiritalis,* 99-110.

The text is about the gemstones of the breastplate of the High Priest of Israel, which is described in the Book of Exodus (Exodus 28: 6-30). The first half of the text is, in fact, a lapidary in the encyclopedic tradition that is comparable to the lapidaries of Theophrastus and Pliny. The gemstones are listed along with a brief discussion of their places of origin and their known properties. In the second part of the text the gemstones are listed again and each is assigned to one of the twelve tribes of Israel. One of the most interesting aspects of the text is the rationale behind each pairing of gemstone and tribe, which Epiphanius explains in careful detail. The explanations are long and compile a variety of ideas about gemstones, ranging from lapidary beliefs in their magical qualities to symbolic associations based upon their appearance, in order to support the pairing of a gemstone with a tribe. The explanations also have a strong exegetical aspect, as Epiphanius constantly relates the meaning of the gemstones to Christ, the Church, and Christian Salvation. For example, in his entry on lapis lazuli, called sapphire, Epiphanius began with a discussion of the symbolic significance of the purple and gold colors of the stone. He then noted that when the gem is ground into dust its color sometimes changes. This, he declared, was a reminder that some members of the tribe of Dan were good while others were bad. The notion of good and bad opened a way for Epiphanius to bring Christ into the discussion; he noted that both Christ and the devil are called the lion, but Christ is called the lion for good reasons whereas the devil is called the lion for bad reasons. At the end of the entry on lapis lazuli, Epiphanius used information from the lapidary tradition in order to illustrate a point, writing, "… many judges arose from this tribe of Dan and set Israel free, just as the dust of this gem when mixed with milk cures swelling and tumors. Those who extract teaching and knowledge concerning the world from the prophets and mix them as with milk with the blessings of Paul's

preaching and with the deeds and marvels of the Gospels, their minds are pure and healed and have become blessed."[69]

With its blend of lapidary knowledge, Christian exegesis, and metaphor, Epiphanius' text is a lapidary as much as it is an allegorical text. The seemingly indiscriminate manner in which Epiphanius cites ideas about gemstones to illustrate ideas testifies to the contingent and flexible nature of the meaning of gemstones in the Greek tradition. A range of meanings and associations existed for each gemstone and they could be invoked as needed, depending upon the context. This finding that the meaning of individual gemstones was not fixed further explains why subject matter has very little bearing upon gemstone type among the carved gemstones in this study. Individual gemstones were usually chosen for *enkolpia* based mainly upon their value, prestige, and availability to the patron, and the flexible and multivalent nature of the meaning of gemstones meant that most could be paired with almost any holy figure in a meaningful way.

This finding is consistent with Liz James' conclusion from her study of the symbolism of colors in Byzantine art. James found that the symbolic associations that colors held were flexible and contingent, in part because the Byzantine concept of color took into account saturation and brightness in addition to hue, and because the semiotic meaning of color was largely dependent upon its context.[70] With James' findings in mind, it should be added that in addition to the texts that describe the properties of gemstones and their allegorical and exegetical meaning, gemstones also held associations that were based upon their physical appearance and surface qualities, such as their color, translucency, and patterns. For the carved gemstones that were

[69] Epiphanius, *Epiphanius de gemmis,* 136.

[70] James, *Light and Colour in Byzantine Art,* 102-103.

used as *enkolpia*, these associations depended largely upon contextual factors such as the identity of the patron saint portrayed and other factors related to the supplicant and their prayers. For example, in Byzantine poems about carved bloodstones, the stone's red inclusions could be associated with either blood or fire, depending upon which holy figure was portrayed. A poem written on a bloodstone with the image of St. Demetrios associated the stone with blood due to the saint's martyrdom, but another poem on a bloodstone with the image of the prophet Daniel associated the red inclusions with fire due to Daniel's association with the fiery furnace.[71] The symbolic associations held by bloodstone because of its red inclusions is consistent with the symbolism of the color red in other works of Byzantine art and literature, according to which the color is typically associated with fire, light, life, and blood.[72] The poems on carved bloodstones demonstrate that the meaning evoked by the stone's red inclusions was flexible and depended largely upon the identity of the holy figure portrayed.

As another example that has been alluded to already, the color blue was associated with Christ's divinity and the heavenly realm, while the color gold represented divine light and the transcendence of Christ.[73] The symbolism carried by the colors blue and gold was likely a reason that lapis lazuli was often chosen for carvings of Christ, in addition to the material's value and prestige. When, however, the lapis stone was used for carvings of the Virgin, the blue color of the stone must have been interpreted somewhat differently, perhaps recalling the heavenly realm and transcendence of divine figures more generally. Likewise, Ioli Kalavrezou's finding that green steatite stones were associated with the Virgin, who in metaphors was sometimes

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[71] Manuel Philes, *Manuelis Philae Carmina: ex codicibus Escurialensibus, Florentinis, Parisinis et Vaticanis*, 38, poem LXXXVII and 136, poem CCLXXXI.

[72] James, *Light and Colour in Byzantine Art*, 106.

[73] Ibid., 104-107.

called the "meadow," can probably also explain the popularity of green jasper, bloodstone, and nephrite for carvings of the Virgin.[74] Since other types of saints were also represented in these green stones, however, it is certain that the symbolic associations of the color green were not applied in exactly the same way for every carved gemstone. The one color with symbolic meaning that was universal is the color purple, which was associated with royalty.[75] It is possible, therefore, that for some amethyst carvings, such as the one with the representation of Christ Pantokrator in the Louvre, the gem was intended to evoke the imperial nature of the subject or the identity of the object's owner (no. 11).[76] The wine-colored appearance of the amethyst stone, however, also associated it with inebriation, and it was recommended as a cure for drunkenness.[77] For some carvings in amethyst, therefore, the gemstone may have been chosen for its medicinal uses rather than for its symbolic associations.

Given the contingent and flexible nature of the meaning and associations held by gemstones, I believe that the most accurate approach for understanding the way that their materiality impacted their function as devotional objects is to acknowledge that every gemstone held multiple "layers" of meaning and that some or all of these layers could be invoked in a flexible manner, depending upon the context and the identity of the holy figure portrayed. Beliefs about gemstones, including their origins, properties, and symbolic meaning, are elements

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[74] Seventy-six percent of the gems with the image of the Virgin are carved from stones that are mostly green in color, such as bloodstone, green jasper, nephrite, and serpentine. These gemstones account for only fifty-four percent of carvings that represent warrior saints and fifty-seven percent of carvings with the image of Christ. For a discussion on the significance of green stone for steatite carvings of the Virgin see Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 79-85.

[75] James, *Light and Colour in Byzantine Art*, 104.

[76] On this gem see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 278, no. 186.

[77] Pliny the Elder, "Book XXXVII: The Natural History of Precious Stones," 432-434, chap. 40; Baldwin, "Michael Psellus on the Properties of Stones," 398.

of cultural knowledge that would have been widely known, as they were transmitted orally and textually throughout the generations. Just as today most people have no trouble understanding the diamond as a symbol of love and marriage when worn as a ring, a sign of excessive wealth when worn in large quantities, and an industrial tool that can cut hard materials, I believe that in Byzantium most people were capable of accepting multiple levels of meaning for gemstones.

Poems written on the topic of icons and *enkolpia* in stone and gemstone confirm the flexible and contingent nature of the meaning held by these materials by demonstrating that same type of stone could be allegorized and described in different ways depending upon the identity of the holy figure represented upon it and the spiritual needs of the owner of the object. The poems tend to allegorize aspects of the natural properties or appearance of stone in order to compare the materials to the holy figures portrayed upon them and to demonstrate the material's suitability for containing the divine presence of those figures. Some poems also address the miraculous nature of representing divine figures and incorporate the concept of the *acheiropoietos*, while in others the properties of stone and gemstone are allegorized in order to describe the holy object's ability to mediate the transference of spiritual blessings and virtues between supplicant and holy figure

Many of the allegories in the poems about icons and *enkolpia* in stone and gemstone are drawn from the belief in the watery nature of stone. Marble, with its glistening surfaces and wavy patterns, had been associated with the ocean since antiquity and was thought to be formed through the hardening of water.[78] Gemstones were also thought to have a watery component that was lost when the material of stone hardened into its final state. The lapidaries express this idea in the entries on rock crystal, which was thought to be ice that had hardened into stone, as well as

[78] Barry, "Walking on Water: Cosmic Floors in Antiquity and the Middle Ages," 630-634.

in the entries on a stone that is half emerald and half jasper. Theophrastus and Pliny both attribute this gemstone's dual-state as the result of liquid matter not having completely hardened, so that it still remained partially in a "watery state."[79] In the Byzantine period, devotional objects carved from glossy gemstones such as jasper are often described as "dewy." For example, the first line of a poem of Manuel Philes on a *panagarion* states that the stone is "enriched with glassy dew."[80]

The belief in the watery nature of stones also has roots in the Judeo-Christian tradition. In the Book of Exodus, Moses saved the Israelites who were suffering from thirst in the desert by finding water in a rock. Moses' discovery of water was a miracle wrought through the grace of God, who promised Moses that if he struck the rock at Horeb, water would flow out of it (Exodus 17:1-7). Although the story about the water from the rock at Horeb first appears in the Book of Exodus, it is also referenced in other Old Testament texts, such as the Book of Psalms, as an example of God's deliverance (Psalm 78:15-19). Water is also a potent symbol of salvation in the New Testament.[81] As explained earlier in this chapter, Christ was referred to as the "rock" or the "cornerstone," a metaphor that lends itself easily to a connection with the story of the miraculous water from the rock at Horeb. St. Paul directly identified Christ with the rock at Horeb in his epistle to the Corinthians, writing that the ancestors, or the Israelites, drank a "spiritual drink" from that rock (1 Corinthians 10:4). In the parable of the Samaritan Woman at the Well, Christ refers to himself as "living water" and promises that anyone who drinks the

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[79] On the stone that is half emerald and half jasper, see Theophrastus, *Theophrastus on Stones*, 51; Pliny the Elder, "Book XXXVII: The Natural History of Precious Stones," 414, chap. 19. On rock crystal see Pliny the Elder, "Book XXXVII: The Natural History of Precious Stones," 394-395, chap. 9.

[80] "Λίθος πιανθεὶς ἐξ ὑαλίνης δρόσου," in Manuel Philes, *Manuelis Philae Carmina: ex codicibus Escurialensibus, Florentinis, Parisinis et Vaticanis*, 288-289, poem LII.

[81] Biblical references from John L. McKenzie, "water" in *The Dictionary of the Bible*, 922.

water that he provides would never thirst, but would have eternal life (John 4:10-15). In the Apocalypse, the river of the water of life flows beneath the throne of God, and it is promised that Christ would lead his flock to the fountain of living waters (Revelations 22:1-2 and 7:17).[82]

Manuel Philes incorporated the lapidary belief that rock crystal is ice that is hardened into stone in two poems about an icon of Christ in rock crystal, which was probably similar to the rock crystal *enkolpion* of Christ in the Benaki Museum (no. 36).[83] The two poems have been transcribed along with English translations below.[84]

Εἰς λίθον κρύον, ἐν ᾧ ἦν γεγλυμμένη ἡ δεσποτικὴ εἰκών.

Ὕδωρ ὁ λίθος οὗτος, οὐκ ὄντως λίθος.
Πήγωυσι δ᾽οὖν καὶ τοῦτον εἰς λίθου φύσιν
Ὁ πηγνὺς εἰς κρύσταλον ὑδάτων χύσιν,
Μήπως ὁ λίθος ἐκλυθεὶς ὑπορρέῃ.

On the cold stone, into which is carved an image of the Lord.

This stone is water, not really stone.
In fact, he even freezes it into the nature of stone.
He freezes flowing water into crystal
Lest the stone be set free to flow away.

Εἰς τὸν αὐτόν.

Ἀμήχανον μέν ἐστιν εἰς ὕδωρ γράφειν
Πλὴν ἔνθα Χριστὸς, εὐχερὲς καὶ τὸ ξέειν.
Ὕδωρ γὰρ ἦν ὁ λίθος, ἀλλ᾽ἐξετράπη
Τὴν δεσποτικὴν εὐλαβηθεὶς εἰκόνα.

[82] With the exception of the reference to 1 Corinthians, the other New Testament references are from John L. McKenzie, "water" in *The Dictionary of the Bible*, 922.

[83] On the rock crystal of Christ in the Benaki Museum see Cormack and Vasilakē, *Byzantium, 330-1453*, 230-231, no. 203.

[84] Manuel Philes, *Manuelis Philae Carmina: ex codicibus Escurialensibus, Florentinis, Parisinis et Vaticanis*, 38, poems LXXXVI and LXXXVII.

On the same.

On the one hand, it's impossible to depict in water.
Except where there is Christ, it is even easy to polish.
For the stone was water, but it was turned aside
in reverence for the image of Christ.

These poems address the theme of the miraculous nature of representing divine figures in images by suggesting that it is Christ's presence that miraculously transformed the material of water into a rock crystal with his image.[85] The poems conjure a mental image of Christ physically entering the material, which, in making way for his presence, formed the relief image as if pushing the material out from within. In this way, the relief carving with Christ's image is not attributed to human artistry, but to the supernatural intervention of Christ, whose will to make himself present within the material of the icon caused a change in its natural state. This idea directly references the concept of the *acheiropoietos*, or a holy image made without human hands. *Acheiropoietos* images addressed the difficult question of whether or not divine figures should be represented in images, and served as authentic "portraits" that verified the appearance of Christ because they were made with his own divine agency instead of with human artistry. Several *acheiropoietos* images existed in Byzantium and the medieval West, but Philes' poems on the rock crystal icon of Christ draws, in particular, from the legend of the Mandylion.[86] According to the legend, the Mandylion was a cloth icon that was miraculously created by the

[85] Pliny the Elder, "Book XXXVII: The Natural History of Precious Stones," 394-395, chap. 9.

[86] On *acheiropoietos* images in Byzantium and in the West see Belting, *Likeness and Presence,* 208-224 and Andrea Nicolotti, *From the Mandylion of Edessa to the Shroud of Turin: the Metamorphosis and Manipulation of a Legend* (Boston: Brill, 2014), passim. On the history of issues concerning representing Christ in images, see the essays in Herbert L. Kessler and Gerhard Wolf, ed., *The Holy Face and the Paradox of Representation: Papers from a Colloquium Held at the Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rome and the Villa Spelman, Florence, 1996* (Bologna: Nuova Alfa Editoriale, 1998).

impression of Christ's wet face. In the sixth-century version of the legend, by Evagrius Scholasticus, Christ washes his face before pressing it into the cloth, and it is water that forms the impression. In the tenth century, however, a variant appeared in the legend in which the impression in the cloth was said to be created with the sweat and blood that dripped from Christ face during his agony in the Garden of Gethsemane.[87] In any case, both versions are relevant to Philes' poems on the rock crystal icon of Christ as both relate that a relief image was miraculously formed with a water source, Christ's presence, and Christ's desire to create an image with his own likeness. By referencing the Mandylion, Philes argues for the authenticity of the image and the appropriateness of the material of rock crystal as a medium in which Christ's holy image could be represented. Further, by suggesting that Christ's presence continuously dwells inside of the rock crystal in which his image is "fixed," the poem testifies to the material's role in making the holy figure present, which was one of the main purposes of an *enkolpion*.

The notion that Christ is "fixed," or dwells within the material of gemstone, brings me to the second theme that appears in poems written on icons and *enkolpia* in stone and gemstone, which concerns the material's suitability for representing holy images and its ability to make the holy figure present. These ideas are expressed, for example, in Manuel Philes' poem on a stone icon of St. Peter. The poem is transcribed and translated below.[88]

Εἰς τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ ἁγίου Πέτρου ἐν λίθῳ γεγλυμμένην.

Εἰς λίθον ἀκρόγωνον ἐστηριγμένος
Τρανῶς ὁ Πέτρος ἐκδιδάσκει τὴν κτίσιν.
Χρεὼν γὰρ αὐτὸν μὴ καμεῖν πρὸς τοὺς λόγους

[87] On the two versions of the legend of the Mandylion that existed in the tenth century see Nicolotti, *From the Mandylion of Edessa to the Shroud of Turin*, 12-16 and 56-69.

[88] Manuel Philes, *Manuelis Philae Carmina: ex codicibus Escurialensibus, Florentinis, Parisinis et Vaticanis*, 22, poem XL.

Ἕως τὸν ὕπνον ἐκδιώξει τῆς πλάνης.

On the icon of St. Peter carved in stone.

Peter, affixed in the corner stone
Teaches the foundation clearly.
For it is necessary for him not to labor on account of words
Until he has banished the sleep of error.

In the first line of the poem, Philes establishes that the material physically contains the saint's divine presence by stating that the saint is "fixed" in the stone. As also demonstrated by the two poems on the rock crystal carving of Christ, this idea appears frequently in Philes' poems about icons in stone and gemstone. The metaphor also relates to the belief in the watery nature of stones, as it is inspired by the idea that stones are formed by become hardened from liquid into their solid state, just like clay hardens into pottery and water hardens into ice. Anything that is present within a hardening material becomes fixed within it. According to Philes' poems, these properties of stone make it an ideal material for fixing and containing the presence of the holy figure.

In addition to suggesting that St. Peter's presence is "fixed" within the material of stone, Philes' poem also notes that St. Peter was a follower of the "foundation stone," or Christ, as well as the teacher of the "foundation," or the apostles and the prophets (1 Peter 2:4; Ephesians 2:20). Philes highlights these metaphorical connections between the saint and the stone in order to demonstrate the suitability of the material for the representation of the saint's image.

A similar idea is expressed in a short poem written on a stone icon of St. Thekla by an unknown author. This poem relates, "The rock conceals. Now, it bears outwardly Thekla."[89] St. Thekla, a follower of the Apostle Paul, was the first female Christian martyr. She was persecuted for her faith throughout her life, and was finally martyred by being swallowed by a rock. Her *vita* frames her martyrdom as her salvation, since she was saved from the men who wanted to attack her by the rock, which opened up and provided a refuge as well as death by martyrdom. According to the *vita,* a voice from Heaven called out, "Thekla, my true servant, do not fear, for I am with you*,* look at where the rock has opened in front of you, for therein will be your eternal home and therein will I provide protection for you."[90] The poem on the icon of Thekla implies that the stone is the perfect material for the representation of her image since it is within a rock that she was able to hide from her attackers and find salvation. Further, given the belief that rock that swallowed Thekla became her "eternal home," it is implied that Thekla's holy presence is also contained within the stone icon.

A poem written by Manuel Philes on a bloodstone carving of St. Demetrios also illustrates how the attributes and meanings of gemstones were connected with the holy figures represented upon them in order to demonstrate the material's suitability for representing the divine and containing holy presence. The poem has been transcribed with an English translation below.[91]

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[89] "Κρύπτει πέτρα. νῦν δ'ὑπεκφέρει Θέκλαν." The verb ὑπεκφέρω means lifted out or carried outward, which in this context suggests that the image of Thekla is carved in relief on the surface of the stone. See Lampros, "Ho Markianos kodix 524," 8, poem 15.

[90] Scott Fitzgerald Johnson, trans., "Miracles of St. Thekla," in *Miracle Tales from Byzantium*, trans. Alice-Mary Maffry Talbot and Scott Fitzgerald Johnson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), vii-xiv and 199.

[91] Manuel Philes, *Manuelis Philae Carmina: ex codicibus Escurialensibus, Florentinis, Parisinis et Vaticanis*, 136-137, poem CCLXXXI. The poem is also translated and discussed in Alice-Mary Talbott,

Εἰς τὸν μέγαν Δημήτριον ἐν λιθῳ πεποιημένον φλέβας ἐρυθρὰς ἔχοντι.

Ἐρυθροβαφὴς ἐκ σφαγῆς ὁ σὸς φάρυγξ,
Ἐρυφροβαφὲς καὶ τὸ τῆς σπάθης στόμα.
Καὶ γὰρ σφαγεὶς ἔσφαξας αὐτὸς τὴν πλάνην,
Ὦ θῦμα καινὸν, ὦ σφαγεῦ ζῶν ἐν λίθῳ.

On the Great Demetrios made from stone having red veins

Your throat is dyed red from slaughter
Even the edge of your sword is dyed red
For having been slaughtered, you yourself slaughtered error
Oh novel sacrifice, oh slayer who lives in stone.

In this poem Philes draws upon the aesthetic aspects of the gemstone's physical properties in order to demonstrate that the bloodstone is ideal for the representation of St. Demetrios, a warrior saint. Philes interprets the red veins of the bloodstone as representing blood, which recalls the saint's martyrdom and therefore the reason for the saint's miraculous abilities and holy status. The blood also alludes to the saint's willingness to "slaughter error" on behalf of his supplicant, indicating that the appearance of the bloodstone also enhanced the *enkolpion's* efficacy as a protective object. By drawing a connection between the gemstone's natural properties and the saint's martyrdom and role as a personal protector, Philes demonstrates that the material is well suited for the representation of the saint's image. In addition to this, by stating that the saint "lives" in the bloodstone, Philes again emphasizes the material's miraculous ability to physically contain the holy figure's presence.

The poems written on the stone icons of St. Peter, St. Thekla, and St. Demetrios demonstrate that the material properties and associations held by stones were considered

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"Epigrams in Context: Metrical Inscriptions on Art and Architecture in the Palaiologan Era," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 53 (1999): 89.

important to the fulfillment of the two main purposes of the devotional icon, which were to represent the holy figure and to make the holy figure present. Since the meaning held by stones and gemstones was multivalent and flexible, ideas about them from various traditions including hagiography, lapidaries, and Christian allegories, as well as simple ideas based upon their physical appearance, could be borrowed with relative ease in order to explain why the material was ideal to represent and house the presence of a particular holy figure. Considered in this way, it can be suggested that a gemstone functioned almost like a relic when it was used as the material for an *enkolpion*. Its affinity with the holy figure portrayed was theoretical, instead of physical, as it established by means of ideas. Nonetheless, just as a relic enhanced the efficacy of an *enkolpion* by making the holy figure present through its physical connection with that holy figure, the gemstone enhanced its efficacy by attracting the holy figure's presence by its metaphorical and theoretical connections with that figure.

From the discussion of the poems thus far it has been demonstrated that the watery nature of stones was allegorized in various ways in order to describe the material's suitability for representing a holy figure and containing divine presence. In addition to their watery state, some gemstones were also thought to have a fiery nature because of their natural properties or appearance. Pyrite and rock crystal were associated with fire because both capable of starting fires, the former by creating sparks and the latter by directing a focused beam of light onto a flammable substance.[92] Bloodstone was associated with fire in part because of its association with the sun and in part because of its red inclusions. In the lapidaries, bloodstone was said to

[92] On pyrites see Pliny the Elder, "Book XXXVII: The Natural History of Precious Stones," 359, chap. 30. On rock crystal see Halleux and Schamp, *Les Lapidaires grecs,* 91-92.

"change the sun" by turning a bowl of water held in the sun to the color of blood.[93] In addition to this, the stone's red inclusions were interpreted as symbolizing flames. Although the red inclusions are globular and also represented drops of blood in certain contexts, there is evidence from works of Byzantine art in other media that suggest that the globular red forms also represented fire. John Cotsonis discovered this in his investigation of lead seals of the Virgin upon which globular forms called "tongues of fire" are represented. Cotsonis found that similar forms appear in manuscript illustrations of the Holy Spirit's descent during Pentecost, and concluded that the "tongues of fire" that appeared on seals of the Virgin were intended to symbolize the descent of the Holy Spirit. The forms not only recalled the Holy Spirit's descent that occurred during the Annunciation, but also referenced the miraculous descent of the Holy Spirit that occurred during the Usual Miracle of the icon of the Virgin at the Blachernae.[94] From Cotsonis' findings it can be concluded that in some contexts the red inclusions in bloodstones could symbolize fire and perhaps even the descent of divine presence. It is also possible that on bloodstone carvings of the Virgin the red inclusions may have been interpreted like the globular forms that appear on her seals, as symbols of the descent of the Holy Spirit, but I have been unable to find textual evidence to support this idea.

As a glossy, green stone with globular red inclusions, bloodstones could be interpreted as both watery and fiery. Some poems written about carved bloodstones highlight their paradoxical nature as both watery and fiery in order to demonstrate the miraculous nature of the holy object and the holy figure portrayed upon it. The fiery aspects of the stone are also related to the holy

[93] In the lapidaries the bloodstone is called heliotrope. On the ritual of "changing the sun" see Pliny the Elder, "Book XXXVII: The Natural History of Precious Stones," 450-452, chap. 60; Halleux and Schamp, *Les Lapidaires grecs,* 234-237.

[94] John Cotsonis, "The Virgin with the 'Tongues of Fire' on Byzantine Lead Seals," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 48 (1994): 221-227.

figures if some significant aspect of their life or martyrdom was related to fire. These ideas are present, for example in Manuel Philes' poem on a bloodstone *enkolpion* of the prophet Daniel, which may have looked like the bloodstone carving of Daniel holding an open scroll in the Cabinet des Médailles (no. 159).[95] The poem has been transcribed below with an English translation.[96]

> Εἰς ἐγκόλπιον ἴασπιν ἐν ᾧ ἔστηκεν ὁ προφήτης Δανιήλ·
> ἔχει δὲ φλέβας πρασίνους καὶ ἐρυθράς.
>
> Ὁ λίθος ὑγρὸς, ἀλλὰ πῦρ ἔνδον βλέπω.
> Στέγει τὸ πῦρ ὁ λίθος, ἡ φλὸξ τὴν δρόσον·
> Καὶ θαυματουργεῖ Δανιὴλ ζῶν ἐν μέσῳ·
> Μὴ τοῖς πάλαι τέσσαρσι πέμπτος εὑρέθη;
>
> On a jasper *enkolpion* having veins of green and red in which stood the Prophet Daniel.
>
> The stone is wet, but I see fire within it.
> The stone covers the fire, the flame (covers) the dew
> And Daniel, living in the middle, works miracles.
> Long ago was not the fifth discovered with the four?

In this poem the author notes in amazement that there is fire in the stone despite the fact that it is wet. He then states that, paradoxically, just as the stone protects the fire from moisture, the fire also protects the moisture that is inherent in the stone. The poem's allusions to fire and dew are a direct reference to the story of Daniel's three companions, the "Holy Children," who were miraculously saved when they were thrown into the fiery furnace due to their refusal to worship a Babylonian idol. As the story goes, although the fire was stoked to be as hot as possible, the three Holy Children were not harmed. They could be seen walking about the

[95] On this gem see Guillou and Jannic Durand, *Byzance,* 438, no. 330.

[96] Manuel Philes, *Manuelis Philae Carmina: ex codicibus Escurialensibus, Florentinis, Parisinis et Vaticanis*, 50, poem CVII.

furnace with an angel, who appeared "like a god." King Nebuchadnezzar, recognizing that the Holy Children had been miraculously saved, released them while proclaiming that henceforth it would be illegal to blaspheme against their god (Daniel 3: 8-30). An additional text, which is included with the Book of Daniel in the Greek Septuagint but excluded as apocryphal in some versions of the bible, contains the "Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Jews." In this text, God is first praised for delivering the Holy Children by sending his angel, who "made the inside of the furnace as if a moist wind were whistling through it."[97] The text also includes the song of the Holy Children, in which God is praised as the creator of heaven and earth. The elements, including fire and dew, are invoked in the hymns of praise in passages that include "Bless the lord, dews and falling snow" and "Bless the lord, fire and heat."[98]

While it is clear that the poem's allusions to fire and dew are a reference to the story of the Holy Children who were protected by a "moist wind" in the fiery furnace, the reason that the story is evoked in connection with an *enkolpion* with the image of Daniel is not immediately apparent. After all, Daniel himself was not throne into the furnace, and the biblical text gives no explanation as to why he was not included in that particular punishment. It may be that Daniel's general association with the Holy Children in Byzantium, both because their story is recorded in the Book of Daniel and because Daniel's liturgy was celebrated with theirs, was enough to justify his association with the fiery furnace.[99] Thematically, Daniel's story is also similar to that

[97] The additions to Daniel are usually inserted between Daniel 3:23 and Daniel 3:24. This verse is from Additions to Daniel 1:27. See Michael D. Coogan, "The Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Jews," in *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*. *Oxford Biblical Studies Online*, accessed March 23, 2015, http://www.oxfordbiblicalcstudies.com/article/book/obso9780195288803/obso9780195288803div11092.

[98] Ibid., Additions to Daniel 1:44-46.

[99] Daniel is commemorated along with the Three Youths who were thrown into the fiery furnace. See Lowden, *Illuminated Prophet Books,* 78; Majeska, "A Medallion of the Prophet Daniel in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection," 363n13; Velimirović, "Liturgical Drama in Byzantium and Russia," 352-359.

of the Holy Children, since he, too, was persecuted by King Nebuchadnezzar and was miraculously saved because of his faith in God. With this in mind, the somewhat obscure final line of the poem can be interpreted as a justification for the representation of Daniel on the bloodstone, in the midst of the "furnace. The "four" can be understood as the Three Children and the angel who was sent into the furnace to save them, and the "fifth" can be understood as Daniel himself. Philes' statement that Daniel "works miracles" while living in the stone indicates that he has replaced the four in the "furnace" of the bloodstone and is present to work miracles on behalf of the supplicant. Daniel's ability to miraculously protect himself from the elements also allows him to protect the elements from one another, thereby fixing them, along with himself, within the stone. By relating the bloodstone's appearance and metaphorical associations to the prophet Daniel, Philes demonstrated that the material was ideal for housing Daniel's divine presence and was therefore well suited as a material for an *enkolpion* with his image.

Similar ideas are present in a poem written by Theodore Balsamon on an icon of St. Theodore. In this poem, the red inclusions in the bloodstone are interpreted as symbolizing fire, instead of blood, because St. Theodore Tiron was martyred by fire for refusing to recant his faith.[100] The poem reads as follows:[101]

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[100] Alexander Kazhdan and Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, "St. Theodore Teron," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (Oxford University Press, 1991), accessed March 23, 2015, http://www.oxfordreference.com.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/view/10.1093/acref/9780195046526.001.0001/acref-9780195046526-e-5401.

[101] Horna, "Die Epigramme des Theodore Balsamon," 189, poem XXIV B. In the poem preceding this one on the same icon (poem XXIV A), the stone of the material is described as "sparking," giving further evidence to the fact that the red inclusions of the stone are interpreted as fire instead of as blood.

Εἰς τὴν αὐτὴν ἁγίαν εἰκόνα.

Πῦρ καὶ δρόσος δύσμαχον αὐχοῦσι κράσιν,
ἡ σὴ δέ, μάρτυς, πρὸς θεὸν παρρησία
καὶ τὰς φύσεις ἤμειψε παρὰ τὴν φύσιν.
τὴν γὰρ στεγανὴν ἰκμάδα τῶν κρυστάλων
εἰς θερμοποιὸν ἐξέτρεψας οὐσίαν
καὶ τὴν μισητὴν αἰθρίαν τῆς καμίνου
πρὸς ψυχροποιὸν ἐξεκλινας νιφάδα.
οὕτω θεοῦ δῶρον σε προςκυνητέον
τυραννικὴ δίδωσιν ἀνδροκτασία
ἄλλοις μὴν ὑπόδειγμα πρὸς σωτηρίαν
ἐμοὶ δὲ θεσαύρισμα τοῦ γήρως μέγα.
ἁφαιρεθεῖς γὰρ τοῦ βίου μοι τὴν χάριν
ὑπὸ βριαρᾶς τοῦ τυραννοῦντος βδέλλας,
ἔσκον μόνον σὲ καὶ βίον καὶ προστάτην.
ὡς γοῦν ἀληθὴς πυρσοπυρφόρος δρόσος
τὴν μὲν φλόγα δρόσιζε τῆς ἁμαρτίας,
τὴν δὲ δρόσον φλόγιζε τῆς ῥᾳθυρίας.

On the same holy image (St. Theodore).

Fire and dew declare (themselves) a difficult combination,
martyr, but your freedom of speech before God
even changed the natural qualities against nature.
For you turned the watertight moisture of the crystals
into a heat producing substance and you
turned the hateful air of the furnace
into the coldness of snow.
In this way, the tyrannical slaughter of men
(gives) you as gift of God who must be worshipped
to others as an exemplar of salvation,
to me as a great treasure in my old age.
For your being deprived of life
by the strong leach of the tyrant
was grace for me
as I have you alone as both life and protection.
Thus, at any rate, the red, firebearing dew of truth
dampens the flame of failure
and burns the dew of laziness.

In this poem, Balsamon compares the miraculousness of the gemstone's combination of dewy green stone and fiery red inclusions with the miraculousness of St. Theodore's martyrdom.

According to the poem, the saint did not suffer when he was thrown into the furnace because, like in the story of the Three Children in the Book of Daniel, he cooled the hot air so that it could not burn him. St. Theodore's ability to miraculously protect himself is attributed to his "freedom of speech," which is likely a reference to his faithfulness to God. At the end of the poem, Balsamon includes another paradox about the stone's dual nature, promising that the watery nature of the stone would quell the "flame of failure," while its fiery nature would "burn the dew of laziness." The author uses these metaphors to testify to the *enkolpion's* role in guiding the supplicant's spiritual health, suggesting that the material properties of the object, as well as the saint portrayed upon it, could help him avoid sin.

In another theme that appears in poems on icons and *enkolpia* carved in stone, the watery nature of stone is allegorized in order to describe, metaphorically, the spiritual blessing that come from the stone when used as a devotional object. Grace, salvation, and miracles are said to flow from the stone, just as in Exodus the saving waters flowed from the rock. This metaphor can be found, for example, in Manuel Philes' poem on icon of John the Baptist carved in stone. This poem has been transcribed below with an English translation.[102]

Εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν ἐγλυμμένον εἰς λίθον.

Ἡ σὴ κεφαλὴ κἂν ἀπετμήθη πάλαι,
Τάχ᾽ ἂν πάλιν ἤλεγχεν Ἡρώδην, μάκαρ,
Εἰ μή τις αὐτὴν ἐξεπέτρωσε ξέσις·
Πλὴν ἐκ λίθου νάματα θαυμάτων πίνω.

On the same (The Prodromos) carved in stone.

Although your head was cut off long ago
Perhaps the blessed one would have questioned Herod again,

[102] Manuel Philes, *Manuelis Philae Carmina: ex codicibus Escurialensibus, Florentinis, Parisinis et Vaticanis*, 61, poem CXLIII.

If not shine had revealed it (the head).[103]
Except that I drink streams of miracles from the stone.

In this poem, Philes references the story of John the Baptist's criticism of King Herod and his subsequent beheading in order to suggest that the Baptist may have continued to haunt Herod even after death, had not his presence been called to the stone *enkolpion* into which his image was revealed through carving. Although not explicitly stated, the poem's references to stone and beheading may also be intended to allude to the ancient myth of Medusa, whose visage had the power to turn onlookers into stone even after she was beheaded. The final line of the poem concludes that although the Baptist could no longer rebuke the sinful king for his misdeeds, his martyrdom and presence in the *enkolpion* meant that he could work miracles for the supplicant. The "streams of miracles" that come from the stone icon are a reference to the water that Moses miraculously brought forth from the rock at Horeb, and are used as a metaphor to describe the bountiful and salvific nature of miracles provided by John the Baptist through the mediation of the icon. The use of the verb "to drink" (πίνω) also calls to mind the physical interaction between the icon and the supplicant's mouth, suggesting that the icon may have been kissed.

A similar idea is expressed on another poem written by Manuel Philes on a stone icon of St. George, which has been transcribed with an English translation below.[104]

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[103] ἐξεπέτρωσε comes from the verb πετρόω, which means "to turn into stone, to petrify." See "πετρόω" in Liddell and Scott, *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon*, 636. The addition of the prefix ἐξ modifies the verb to add to it the sense "out of," which leads to the interpretation of the verb as meaning "reveal out of the stone." I appreciate the assistance of Dr. Konstantina Karterouli in teasing out the meaning of this verb.

[104] Manuel Philes, *Manuelis Philae Carmina: ex codicibus Escurialensibus, Florentinis, Parisinis et Vaticanis*, 133, poem CCLXVI.

Εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν (Γεώργιον) ἐκ λίθου πεποιημένον.

Τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἔρημον ἐσχηκὼς βίον,
Εὗρόν σε Μωσῆν τοῦ θεοῦ τὸν ὁπλίτην.
Διψῶν δὲ τὴν σὴν ἀπὸ τῶν μύρων χάριν
Τεραστίων πρόχυσιν ἐκ πέτρας πίνω.

On the same (George) made from stone.

Having had a life void of good things
I found you, soldier of God, like Moses.
Thirsting for your grace (that comes) from the myrrh
I drink the pouring out of miracles from the rock.

In this poem, the supplicant's relationship with the saint is compared directly with Moses' discovery of the miraculous water in the rock. Just as the Israelites were deprived of water in the desert, the supplicant's life is deprived of "good things," perhaps an illusion to a lack of virtue or piety. Finding St. George was like Moses' discovery of water in the rock in that it saves the supplicant, who "thirsts" for the saint's grace. The poem also alludes to the possibility that the icon emitted miraculous myrrh, or that it may have even worked as a fountain. In this way, it draws to mind the fountain of the living waters that is promised to the faithful in Revelations 7:17. Through these metaphors, the poem positions the material of stone as a material conduit for the spiritual gifts of grace and salvation, which "flow" from the stone to the supplicant, who consumes it by drinking.

Another poem in which the watery nature of stone is used as a metaphor for spiritual gifts is a poem written by Manuel Philes on an *enkolpion* with the representation of several saints. The poem is transcribed with an English translation below.[105]

[105] Manuel Philes, *Manuelis Philae Carmina: ex codicibus Escurialensibus, Florentinis, Parisinis et Vaticanis*, 137-138, poem CCLXXXIV.

Εἰς ἐγκόλπιον διαφόρων ἁγίων.

Θεοῦ νεφέλη δεῦρο καὶ λίθου γνόφος
Καὶ τρεῖς ἔτι σίφωνες εἰς ὄμβρων χύσιν
Ὁ Μυρέων πρόεδρος, ὁ Ζαχαρίου
Σὺν τῷ νικητῇ πανταχοῦ Γεωργίῳ.
Ἕλκουσι γάρ μοι ῥεῖθρα μακροθυμίας
Ἐκ τῶν θαλασσῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ τῶν ἀφθόνων.

On an *enkolpion* with various saints.

The cloud of God hither and the darkness of the stone
And also three spouts for the pouring of rain
The Proedros of Myreon (Athanasios of Myreon?), the (son) of Zacharias (John the Baptist), together with the victor everywhere, George.
For they draw from me streams of forbearance
from the bountiful seas of God.

In this poem, the watery nature of the stone is allegorized in several ways in order to describe the blessings of God and the object's role in mediating the spiritual exchange between the supplicant and the patron saints. The description of the *enkolpion* suggests that it is a carving of some type of dark, cloudy gemstone such as blue chalcedony. As a "cloud of God," the stone stands symbolically as a source of God's blessings. The saints represented upon the stone are compared to rain spouts in order to demonstrate that they are conduits for the "rain," or the spiritual blessings that pour from the "cloud of God." In addition to suggesting that the stone *enkolpion* transfers spiritual blessings to the supplicant, the poem also relates that it improves the supplicant's spiritual state. The supplicant is inspired by the saints and their blessings to pour out streams of virtue of his own, in the form of forbearance. This, again, is attributed to God's grace with a water metaphor, as the poem concludes that the forbearance comes from the "bountiful seas of God."

One final metaphor to be examined from the poems on gemstone *enkolpia* concerns a comparison of a carved gemstone with the stone plaques into which the Ten Commandments were carved in the Book of Exodus. The metaphor appears, for example, in a poem written about an *enkolpion* of the Virgin, which that was discussed in Chapter Two. The poem states, "I have you (carved) on the plaques of the heart, Virgin, just as the plaque was carved with the word of God."[106] With this comparison, the stone carvings of the Ten Commandments are positioned as the material expression of God's word just as the carved gemstone is the material representations of the Virgin. God's carving of the Ten Commandments is held as a prototype for the carved gemstone, and thereby serves as a justification of the representation of holy figures in stone. The poem also alludes to the permanence and strength of the supplicant's devotion to the Virgin, who is said to be carved upon his heart. The poem suggests that the Virgin's presence over the heart, whether metaphorically "carved" as the poem suggests, or lying directly upon it through the agency of the *enkolpion*, inspires the supplicant to be faithful to God, just as the stone tablets of Moses were meant to guide the Israelites towards righteousness.

As another example, in a poem written about an icon or *enkolpion* of the prophet Daniel, St. Demetrios, and the Archangel Michael carved in "demonstone," Manuel Philes alluded to the metaphorical similarity between the carved stone icon and the carved stone tablets of Moses. This poem is reproduced fully and discussed in detail in Chapter Ten, so here it will be discussed more briefly in the context of its metaphor that relates the stone material of the icon to the stone tablets of Moses. Writing in the first person with the voice of the supplicant, Philes first wrote that he beholds, or observes, God "according to Moses" (Καὶ κατὰ Μωσῆν τὸν Θεὸν δεῦρο βλέπων). He then suggested that taking the "intelligible tablets" (πλάκας νοητὰς) along with the

[106] "Εν καρδίας ἔχων σε πλαξὶ, Παρθένε,Θεοῦ λόγον πλὰξ ὥσπερ ἐγγεγλυμμένην…" See Lampros, "Ho Markianos kodix 524," 22, no. 54. This poem is reproduced in full in Chapter Two.

saints depicted upon the *enkolpion* would help the supplicant "certainly succeed with Jesus" (Καφῶς Ἰησοῦν εὐτυχῶ).[107] With his references to Moses and the stone tablets of the Ten Commandments, Philes suggests that the stone material of the icon would serve as a reminder of God's law and therefore help the supplicant please Jesus by avoiding sin.

This discussion of the materiality has demonstrated that the properties, associations, and meanings held by stones and gemstones enhanced their efficacy as devotional objects. Their high value and prestige allowed them to function as "gifts" that honored and propitiated the holy figures carved on their surfaces, while their rich and flexible "layers" of meaning made possible many metaphors that spoke to the spiritual value of the holy object and its ability to connect the supplicant with the divine figure represented on it.

[107] Manuelis Philae, *Manuelis Philae Carmina: Ex Codicibus Escurialensibus, Florentinis, Parisinis Et Vaticanis*, 138, poem CCLXXXV.

Chapter Ten: The Amuletic Function of Byzantine Carved Gemstones and their Use in Divination Rituals

Gemstone *enkolpia* had a protective aspect that coincided with their primary function as devotional objects. Those who owned them used them to appeal to their patron saints for protection and assistance as much as to seek intercession and salvation. The protective aspect of carved gemestones is the reason that so many are carved with holy figures who were known to be especially effective as protectors, such as the Archangel Michael and warrior saints. The Archangel Michael and warrior saints are represented clad in armor and with drawn weapons, which made them appear ready to defend the faithful against adversaries in the physical and spiritual realms. The bloodstone of the Archangel Michael in the Cabinet des Médailles is even inscribed with the words "The Protector" to enhance the gem's efficacy as a protective object (no. 46).[1]

Even holy figures who were not warrior saints were expected to protect their supplicants. When worn as *enkolpia,* carved gemstones served a protective function regardless of the identity of the holy figure portrayed. This is made clear, for example, by a poem written on an *enkolpion* carved with an image of the Virgin. This poem is written in first person in the voice of the owner of the *enkolpion*, Theodore Doukas, and reads, "Now I your servant Theodore Doukophyes carry you as a shield over the breast."[2] Given that the poem specifies that the *enkolpion* is carved, it is very likely that its material was gemstone or steatite. Described as a

[1] Ο ΦΗΛΑΞ, most likely a misspelling of ὁ φύλαξ , "the Protector." On this gem see Guillou and Durand, *Byzance*, 280, no. 189.

[2] "…ὡς θυρεὸν νῦν καὶ πρὸ τῶν στέρνων φέρω Φεόδωρος σὸς Δουκοφυὴς οἰκέτης." See Lampros, "Ho Markianos kodix 524," 22, no. 54.

"shield," the *enkolpion* was expected to protect the supplicant, Theodore, with the holy presence of the Virgin as well as with the object itself, which lay like a shield over the breast and the heart.

The protective nature carved gemstones likens them to amulets, as does their small size and the fact that they were normally kept concealed.[3] The same can be said, in fact, of *enkolpia* of many types.[4] Cross-shaped phylacteries were especially associated with protection, with the sign of the cross itself functioning as an apotropaic symbol. The protective nature of cross-shaped phylacteries was frequently augmented with holy images and particles of the True Cross. They survive in great numbers and in a range of materials, which indicates that rich and poor alike wore them to ward off evil and aid in the salvation of the soul.[5]

The ambiguous nature of *enkolpia* as devotional objects with an amuletic aspect is demonstrated by the fourteenth-century account of the persecution of the priest Garianos, who was accused of wearing a Bogomil symbol under his hat. The "symbol," must have been considered a Bogomil amulet, but when the matter was investigated it turned out to be an *enkolpion* of the Virgin.[6]

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[3] On Byzantine amulets see André Grabar, "Amulettes Byzantines du Moyen Age," in *Mélanges d'histoire des religions offerts à Henri-Charles Puech* (Paris: Presse universitaires de France, 1974), 531-541; Vera N. Zalesskaja, "Amulettes byzantines magiques et leurs liens avec la littérature apocryphe," in *Actes du XIVe congrés international des études byzantines,* vol. 3 (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Republicii socialiste România, 1976), 243-247; Spier, "Medieval Byzantine Magical Amulettes and Their Tradition," 25-62.

[4] The dual function of Byzantine jewelry and *enkolpia* in providing protection and devotion has been explored in Pitarakis, "Objects of Devotion and Protection," 164-181.

[5] Kartsonis, "Protection against All Evil," 73-102, esp. 83-100.

[6] … ἀλλ'ἕτερόν τι σύμβολον και μίασμα τῆσ τῶν Βωγομίλων αἱρέσεως." Greek from Franz Miklosich and Joseph Müller, *Acta et diplomata Graeca medii aevi: sacra et profana, collecta et edita* (Aalen: Scientia Verlag, 1968), 59-60, part XXXIV. Cited in Parani, "The Personal Life of Objects in Medieval Byzantium," 170.

The use of a gemstone *enkolpion* as an amulet is described in a letter written in the early fourteenth century by Manuel Gabalas. The text reads as follows: [7]

> Εἰς τὸν παραλήπτην στέλλει ἕνα τῶν ἐκπηδώντων ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ μνήματος (τοῦ Ἰωάννου τοῦ Θεολόγου) λίθων εἰκονίζοντα ἐφ᾽ἑκατέρας τῶν πλευρῶν τὸν Χριστὸν καὶ τὸν ἠγαπημένον μαθητὴν οὐχὶ ὥς ποτε συνδειπνοῦντας ἀλλὰ συναλγοῦντας καὶ συσκεπτομένους, ὅπως ἄν τὸ Βάρβαρον ἐξελάσωσι. Τὸ θαυματουργικὸν τοῦτο δῶρον κατὰ μὲν τοὺς πολέμους θὰ αὐξάνῃ τὸ μένος τοῦ παραλήπτου, ἐν εἰρήνῃ δὲ θὰ ἀνακαθαίρῃ αὐτοῦ τοὺς λογισμούς, τέλος δὲ τὸ αὐτὸ προαναγγέλλει τὴν ἀνακατάληψιν τῆς Ἐφέσου καὶ τὴν ἐκεῖσε ἔλευσιν τοῦ παραλήπτου μετὰ τοῦ Βασιλέως.
>
> He sends to the recipient one of the stones that have originated from the holy memorial (of John the Theologian), which portrays on each side Christ and his beloved pupil, and assuredly not as dining together but suffering together and reflecting together on how to drive out the Barbarian(s). This miraculous gift will increase the might of the recipient in battles, in peace it will make clear his reasoning power, in the end, the very one will herald the recapture of Ephesus and the coming thither of the recipient along with the king.

Gabalas lived in Ephesus, which in the early fourteenth century had been conquered by the Seljuk Turks. His letter and the stone with the image of Christ and St. John the Theologian were sent to the *Megas Domestikos*, the commander in chief of the Byzantine army.[8] Based upon the textual description of the object and surviving examples carved gemstones, it is likely that the object was a gemstone carved with Christ on the obverse and St. John the Theologian on the reverse that was worn as an *enkolpion.* In his letter, Gabalas claims that the two holy figures carved onto the gemstone are strategically planning a way to expel the Barbarians, and that the *enkolpion* would miraculously strengthen the *Megas Domestikos* and the king in battles. Gabalas, writing from an occupied territory, must have truly hoped that the amuletic aspects of

[7] Greek from Stauros Kourousēs, *Manouēl Gavalas eita Matthaios Mētropolitēs Ephesou, (1271/2-1355/60)* (Athens: Typographeion Adelphōn Myrtidē, 1972), 265. Cited in Apostolos Karpozilos, "Realia in Byzantine Epistolography XIII-XVc," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 88 (1995): 82.

[8] Karpozilos, "Realia in Byzantine Epistolography XIII-XVc," 82.

the *enkolpion* would be effective and that it would help the military leadership restore Ephesus to Byzantine control.

As a material, gemstones were thought to have inherent properties of their own that contributed to their secondary function as amulets. These properties included the ability to heal, protect, and work miracles. Gemstones were also used in divination rituals. Longstanding beliefs about the natural and supernatural properties of gemstones were passed down through the centuries and across the cultures of the Mediterranean in textual sources, which are the most important resource for understanding the amuletic properties of carved gemstones in Byzantium. The texts differ from one another in typology, scope, and sources, the result of their origination in different ancient cultures of the Mediterranean and the Levant over a span of hundreds of years. Despite their differences, however, most of the texts impart some of the same ideas, with those written later tending to build upon, or occasionally refute, the knowledge imparted by earlier texts.[9] Although impossible to measure, oral and practical traditions must have played a significant role in transmitting ideas about gemstones as well.

In the secondary literature on textual sources about gemstones, the texts are usually separated into typological categories. The three main types are the scientific lapidaries, which record the natural properties and information about stones in an encyclopedic fashion, the magical and astrological lapidaries, which focus on the supernatural properties of gemstones and their applications, and the allegorical texts, which discuss the meaning of gemstones in a Christian context. The most relevant secondary source on the texts that informed beliefs about gemstones in Byzantium is Halleaux and Schamp's introduction to *Les Lapidaires grecs,* in which the typological categories noted above are outlined and the texts are identified and

[9] Halleux and Schamp have noted that lapidary texts tend to be compilations in their discussion of the typology of lapidaries. See Halleux and Schamp, *Les Lapidaires grecs*, xvi.

discussed.[10] Another scholar who has made contributions to the study of textual sources on stones in antiquity and Byzantium is the geologist Ruslan Kostov, who published two articles on addressing the challenge of reconciling the ancient names for gemstones with their modern equivalents.[11] Ronnie Terpening provided a helpful survey of ancient and medieval lapidaries in his article on the "L'intelligenza," an Italian poem from the thirteenth or fourteenth century that includes a lapidary.[12] Christal Meier's book on the allegorical interpretations of gemstones also deserves mentioning, as it is the most comprehensive resource on texts about gemstones. The book explores all of the meanings and functions of gemstones and includes a section on ancient lapidaries. Despite the wealth of information contained in Meier's book, it is of limited use for a focused study on beliefs about stone in Byzantium because it is organized by thematic topics instead of by culture, date, or author.[13] Finally, Eleutheria Avgoloupi drew upon many of the primary sources about gemstones in her recently published book on the symbolism of imperial gemstones in Byzantium. She did not, however, discuss lapidaries that had not already been published by others. [14]

In my discussion of the textual sources that shaped beliefs about gemstones in Byzantium, I have worked with the primary sources directly, although I am indebted to the secondary sources listed above, primarily *Les Lapidaires grecs* by Halleaux and Schamp, for

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[10] Halleux and Schamp, *Les Lapidaires grecs*, xiii-xxxiv.

[11] Ruslan I. Kostov, "Notes and Interpretation of the 'Thracian Stone' in Ancient Sources," *Annual of the University of Mining and Geology "St. Ivan Rilski"* 50 (2007): 99-102; Ruslan I. Kostov, "Orphic Lithica as a Source of Late Antiquity Mineralogical Knowledge," *Annual of the University of Mining and Geology "St. Ivan Rilski"* 51 (2008): 109-115.

[12] Terpening, "The Lapidary of L'Intelligenza: Its Literary Background," 75-85.

[13] Meier, *Gemma spiritalis,* 56-66 (on ancient lapidaries).

[14] Avgoloupi, *Simbologia delle gemme imperiali byzantine,* 45-230.

bringing the relevant primary sources to light. It must also be clarified that in this chapter I have focused only on those texts that would have impacted beliefs about the amuletic properties of gemstones. Texts about gemstones from the Christian tradition were already discussed in Chapter Nine.

The texts that shaped beliefs about the amuletic properties of semi-precious stones in Byzantium are the lapidaries, which describe the precious stones of the world, their origins and properties, and their potency for use in medicine and magic. The earliest lapidary to survive from the Greek-speaking world is the lapidary of Theophrastus, which was written in the fourth century B.C.E. Theophrastus' lapidary is one of several scientific texts that are attributed to him, which include treatises on plants, astronomy, meteorology, water, fire, and geometry.[15] In his lapidary, Theophrastus methodically categorizes each stone with a description, place of origin, and common uses. His descriptions are concise and scientific, and generally do not include information on the medicinal and magical properties of stone.[16] This type of information is, however, included in the lapidary of Pliny the Elder, which was written in the first century C.E. and counts the lapidary of Theophrastus as one of its sources. Pliny's text on gemstones is found in book thirty-seven of *Natural History*.[17] His entries for each gemstone are longer than those of Theophrastus and include digressions that speak to the range information on stones that was available in the first century C.E, a time at which the territories under Roman control included Egypt, Syria, and Judea. For example, in his entry on jasper, Pliny took the opportunity to refute

[15] John F. Richards and Earle Radcliffe Caley, "Introduction," in Richards and Caley, *Theophrastus on Stones*, 3-4.

[16] Theophrastus, *Theophrastus on stones*, 19-30 (text), 45-62 (translation), 63-222 (commentary).

[17] Pliny the Elder, "Book XXXVII: The Natural History of Precious Stones," 386-468.

the "falsehoods" of the Magi, who claimed that the stone was useful to public speakers.[18] Pliny's entry on jasper is one of many in which elements from the oral and textual traditions of the Chaldeans are layered on topic of the encyclopedic information passed down from the lapidary of Theophrastus.

The other lapidaries that would have influenced beliefs about gemstones in Byzantium are the magical and astrological lapidaries. They are the Orphic Lapidary, the lapidary of Damigeron, the Nautical Lapidary, and the Cyranides, which is combined with another lapidary attributed to Socrates and Dionysus. These lapidaries arise from the context of Greek Alexandria and are influenced by Chaldean, Hermetic, and Neoplatonic traditions.

The oldest of these lapidaries is the lapidary of Damigeron, which was written in Alexandria in the first century and revised in Latin in the fifth century. Only the fifth-century Latin version survives. The text contains two brief astrological lapidaries, which connect gemstones with their corresponding planets. For example, the heliotrope is connected with the sign of Leo, for the sun. The text specifies that the heliotrope should be engraved with the image of a scarab with rays. The astrological lapidaries are followed by a longer lapidary in which eighty gemstones are listed along with a description of their physical properties and applications in magic, medicine, and divination.[19]

The Cyranides dates to the second century. It is a composite text that contains the Cyranides and the lapidary of Socrates and Denys. The texts describe the miraculous properties of gemstones and their magical and medicinal applications. Some entries include directions for consecrating the gemstones by engraving them with images. For example, in the entry on

[18] Ibid., 431, chap. 37.

[19] Halleux and Schamp, *Les Lapidaires grecs,* 220-227 (dating and description of text), 230-290 (text and translation), and 232 (on the stone heliotrope).

hyacinth, today's sapphire, the text recommends that the gem is engraved with an image of Poseidon and worn as a ring. Thus consecrated, the gem would have the magical properties of emerald as well as the ability to save those at sea from storms.[20]

The Orphic Lapidary was also dated to the second century by Halleux and Schamp, who cited, among other reasons, its close similarity to the Cyranides. The Orphic Lapidary derives its name from its erroneous attribution to the mythical Orpheus in the Byzantine era. According to the preface, the knowledge imparted by the lapidary is a gift to mankind from the Greek god Hermes, who instructed the author to reveal to men the "divine marvels" that were set forth.[21] The lapidary's focus is slightly different from the others in that it reveals how to use gemstones to propitiate the gods. For example, the text relates that offering a green jasper stone during a sacrifice would "warm the heart of the blessed" and, in return, the deities would bring rain and ensure fertile fields.[22]

The Nautical Lapidary has been dated approximately to the Byzantine period.[23] It only includes gemstones with properties that are relevant to seafarers. It has been noted that the gemstones have a physical property that links them to the sea, such as a blue color or translucence. One entry recommends that a gem is engraved with the image of Poseidon. The entries are brief and practical, with a focus on thwarting the many possible disasters that could

[20] Ibid., 134-144 (introduction and dating) and 166 (on hyacinth).

[21] Ibid., 4 (introduction) and 53-57 (dating). All quotations from the text presented in Halleux and Schamp have been translated from the French into English.

[22] "μακάρων ἰαίνεται ἦτορ," from ibid., 96.

[23] Ibid, 179-190. For an analysis of the text as well as an English translation, see Sabino Perea Yébenes, "Magic at Sea: Amulets for Navigation," in *Magical Practice in the Latin West, Papers from the International Conference Held at the University of Zaragoza, 30 Sept.-1 Oct. 2005,* ed. R. L. Gordon and Francisco Marco Simón (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 457-486.

befall a person at sea. For example, the first entry reads, "The carbuncle and the chalcedony, if worn from childhood, prevent you from going under if your ship is wrecked."[24] The eight stones discussed were generally not selected for gemstone *enkolpia* in Byzantium, but the lapidary is still worth noting as it demonstrates the importance of a gemstone's color and surface qualities in determining its properties, as well as the way in which gemstones were used as amulets in a specific context.

The tract on stones written by Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis, also transmitted ideas about the natural and magical properties of gemstones to the Byzantines. This fourth-century text, called *De Gemmis,* is about the twelve gemstones that were set into the breastplate of the High Priest of Israel. It was already described in detail in Chapter Nine, so it will be discussed only briefly here. *De Gemmis* is usually categorized as an allegorical text, but it can also be described as a Christian lapidary. The first part of the text is written in the tradition of the encyclopedic lapidaries. In the second part, lapidary lore is blended with Christian exegesis and allegory to explain the significance of each stone in a Christian context.[25] Thus, although technically a Christian text, Epiphanius' *De Gemmis* is relevant to this discussion because it demonstrates how easily lapidary lore could be appropriated in a Christian context.

The lapidaries demonstrate that a belief in the natural and supernatural properties of gemstones was engrained in Greek and Roman culture, at least in the ancient and late antique worlds. The relevant question to ask is whether these beliefs survived to the Byzantine era and therefore influenced the function of carved gemstones. The material and textual evidence suggests that these beliefs did survive and that knowledge about the properties of gemstones was

[24] Yébenes, "Magic at Sea: Amulets for Navigation," 459.

[25] Epiphanius, *Epiphanius de gemmis;* Stone, "An Armenian Epitome of Epiphanius's 'De Gemmis,'" 467-476.

considered part of the same category as astronomy, dream interpretation, and alchemy. All were ancient arts from the classical tradition that interested the intellectuals of the Byzantine court, who engaged with them as legitimate sources of knowledge from their past. Some of the ancient arts from the classical tradition, especially those with a connection to the occult, were publically discouraged and even censured, to varying degrees. Due to their useful applications, however, intellectuals practiced them with discretion at the behest of important and imperial patrons of the court.[26]

For example, Leo the Mathematician, who lived in the ninth century, was a renowned astrologist who was also famous for making talismanic status. He presented himself as the New Solomon in reference to the legendary King Solomon, who worked miracles and subdued demons, in order to justify and elevate his practices.[27] A contemporary of Leo the Mathematician, Patriarch John VII the Grammarian, practiced sorcery and divination.[28] The foremost intellectual of the eleventh century, Michael Psellos, dabbled in classical and ancient learning of many types including astrology, alchemy, demonology, talisman-making, and divination.[29] Several prominent intellectuals of the twelfth century practiced magic. Michael Italikos wrote a treatise on Chaldean magic, although he cautiously tried to disguise his interest in the subject by writing with a critical tone. The evidence from a letter, however, in which

[26] Duffy, "Reactions of Two Byzantine Intellectuals to the Theory and Practice of Magic: Michael Psellos and Michael Italikos," 83-97; Paul Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143-1180* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 377-380; Paul Magdalino, "Occult Science and Imperial Power in Byzantine History and Historiography (9th-12th Centuries)," in Magdalino and Mavroudi, *The Occult Sciences in Byzantium,* 119-162.

[27] Paul Magdalino, *L'Orthodoxie des astrologues: la science entre le dogme et la divinaition a Byzance (VIIe-XIVe siecle)* (Paris: Lethielleux, 2006), 62-71.

[28] Magdalino, "Occult Science and Imperial Power in Byzantine History and Historiography," 123.

[29] Ibid., 94; Duffy, "Reactions of Two Byzantine Intellectuals to the Theory and Practice of Magic," 83-90.

Italikos disclosed that he had been consulted as a *magos* to find a magical cure for a dying woman, suggests that he was a known practitioner of Chaldean theurgy. Italikos declined to treat the woman, but then sent another letter offering to deliver a remedy in person, presumably so that he could remain off the record.[30] Another intellectual of the twelfth century, John Tzetzes, practiced dream interpretation and astrological divination. In a letter to Emperor Manuel I Komnenos, he wrote that priests practiced divination and dream interpretation as well.[31] Finally, three high-ranking courtiers of the twelfth century, Isaac Aaron, Skleros Seth and Michael Sikidites, were blinded by Emperor Manuel I Komnenos because they were accused of practicing demonic sorcery.[32]

The harsh punishment inflicted by Emperor Manuel I Komnenos for sorcery notwithstanding, the occult arts were often practiced in the service of the Byzantine emperor. Emperors were particularly interested in methods of divination, and employed learned intellectuals in the practice of political prophecy. For example, in the ninth century Patriarch John VII the Grammarian ingratiated himself with Emperor Theophilos and other members of the court by providing them with prophecies. He practiced a variety of divinatory arts including hepatoscopy, lecanomancy, necromancy, and sorcery.[33] In the eleventh century, the historian Michael Atteliates attributed the fall of Emperor Michael VII to his misplaced attention to practitioners of occult science, among them diviners, astronomers, and those who made

[30] Duffy, "Reactions of Two Byzantine Intellectuals to the Theory and Practice of Magic," 92.

[31] Mavroudi, "Occult Science and Society in Byzantium: Considerations for Future Research," 77-81.

[32] Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143-1180*, 379.

[33] Magdalino, "Occult Science and Imperial Power in Byzantine History and Historiography," 123-124.

"prophecies from statues by ritual."[34] As another example from the eleventh century, Emperor Alexios I Komnenos consulted an astrologer for help with negotiations during the battle with the Penchegs.[35] The fact that Byzantine Emperors engaged with sorcerers and diviners for political prophecies must have been well known, as Niketas Choniates, who disapproved of the practice, criticized the emperors Andronikos I Komnenos, Manuel I Komenos, Alexios III Angelos, and Issac II Angelos for their engagement with diviners in his *Historia*.[36] It should be added that some emperors who engaged with the occult arts also did so because they were interested in ancient and classical forms of knowledge. Emperor Manuel I Komnenos, the same emperor who blinded several court officials for practicing sorcery, commissioned treatises on alchemy and even wrote a tract in defense of astrology himself.[37] It may be that those who he blinded had crossed the line from practicing the occult arts within acceptable bounds to a manner that was indefensible, even for an emperor with an interest in occult practices.

In Byzantium, lapidary texts were probably preserved, among other tracts containing ancient learning, in the imperial library. They may have also been preserved in the private libraries of wealthy individuals, which in rare cases could rival the imperial book collection.[38] Texts on the subjects of ancient science and the occult arts also circulated throughout the medieval Mediterranean through borrowing, copying, as well as through gift giving.[39] Given

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[34] Ibid., 137.

[35] Mavroudi, "Occult Science and Society in Byzantium: Considerations for Future Research," 76.

[36] Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143-1180*, 12.

[37] Ibid., 377-379.

[38] Most famously, Patriarch Photios possessed an extensive private library. See Photius, *The Library of Photius*, ed. John Henry Freese (London: Society for promoting Christian knowledge, 1920).

[39] Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143-1180,* 378-379; Mavroudi, "Occult Science and Society in Byzantium: Considerations for Future Research," 73-74 and 83.

that many Greek manuscripts have not survived to this day, it is difficult to know with certainty the circumstances under which the lapidary texts survived and how they exerted their influence. Some facts about the use of lapidary texts in Byzantium are known, however, and they have been listed below in an effort to further contextualize this discussion. The Cyranides, the Orphic Lapidary, and the Natutical Lapidary are all known to have had a presence in Byzantium. The Orphic Lapidary was certainly read in Byzantine times, as in the twelfth century John Tzetzes attributed it to the mythical Orpheus.[40] So too was the Cyranides, which was translated from Greek into Latin in Constantinople in the twelfth century during the reign of Manuel I Komnenos. The Cyranides was translated along with several other texts of the natural and occult sciences, including a book on dream interpretation, two tracts on herbs and plants, and the astrological treatise of Flaccus Africus, called *Compendium aereum*.[41] The Nautical Lapidary dates to the Byzantine period and, in one surviving manuscript, it is paired with texts of an occult nature. The manuscript, *Paris Graecus 2424*, includes texts on astrology and divination.[42]

The evidence suggests that the lapidary of Damigeron had a presence in Byzantium, although there are no sources that document its existence there with certainty. The tenth-century *Geoponica* lists Damigeron as one of its sources, but the magical lore that is so characteristic of the lapidary is not present in the *Geoponica*.[43] The three earliest manuscripts of the lapidary of

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[40] Halleux and Schamp, *Les Lapidaires grecs*, 67-69.

[41] Magdalino, "Occult Science and Imperial Power in Byzantine History and Historiography," 160; Charles Burnett, "Late Antique and Medieval Latin Translations of Greek Texts on Astrology and Magic," in Magdalino and Mavroudi, *The Occult Sciences in Byzantium,* 329-330.

[42] Yébenes, "Magic at Sea: Amulets for Navigation," 458.

[43] Halleux and Schamp, *Les Lapidaires grecs*, 225.

Damigeron are from medieval Italy and date from the eleventh century through the fourteenth century. In the prologue of one of the texts, the scribe claims to have translated the lapidary into Latin from a Greek manuscript. This claim was deemed false by the classicist David Pingree, and therefore cannot be used as proof that a Greek copy of Damigeron's lapidary existed.[44] Nonetheless, the fact that three early Latin copies of the lapidary of Damigeron are from medieval Italy, which had extensive contacts with Byzantium, makes it likely that the Byzantines knew of the work and that a Greek copy existed in Constantinople.

The encyclopedic lapidaries were also known in Byzantium. Their information was transmitted through medical tracts, in particular those of Dioscorides and Galen. Dioscorides included a discussion of the medicinal use of stones and minerals in Book Five of *de Materia Medica,* which was still in use during the Byzantine period. The gemstones recommended for medicinal purposes include hematite, agate, galactite, lapis lazuli (called sapphire), jasper, and serpentine.[45] Galen wrote over three-hundred tracts, and while some were still in use during the Byzantine period it is uncertain whether the one in which he describes the use of a gemstone amulet continued to hold influence.[46] In the tract, called *Simple Remedies,* Galen described an experiment in which he tested the healing properties of an amulet of green jasper. The source

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[44] David Pingree, "The Diffusion of Arabic Magical Texts in Western Europe," in *La diffusione delle scienze islamiche nel Medio Evo europeo convegno internazionale (Roma, 2-4 ottobre 1984),* ed. Biancamaria Scarcia Amoretti (Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 1987), 62-64.

[45] For the text in translation see Dioscorides Pedanius, *De materia medica*, trans. Lily Y. Beck (Hildesheim: Olms-Weidmann, 2005), 372-401. On the tradition of this manuscript in the Byzantine period see John M. Riddle, "Byzantine Commentaries on Dioscorides," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 38 (1984): 95-102.

[46] Vivian Nutton has written that while Galen was an important source of medicinal knowledge in Byzantium, more research is needed to determine which of his many texts survived and continued to be used. See Vivian Nutton, "Galen in Byzantium," in *Material Culture and Well-Being in Byzantium (400-1453): Proceedings of the International Conference (Cambridge, 8-10 September 2001),* ed. Michael Graubart et al. (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2007), 171-176.

from which Galen derived the procedure, a tract purportedly by the Egyptian King Nechepso, recommended that the gemstone should be engraved with the image of a serpent and hung over the stomach or esophagus. From his experiment, Galen concluded that the gemstone amulet worked just as well without the image.[47]

Theophrastus' lapidary must have been known and read in Byzantium, as it is preserved in several Greek manuscripts. One has been dated to the twelfth or the fourteenth century and the others have been dated to the fifteenth century.[48] A Greek copy of Pliny's *Natural History* is not known, but elements of it survive in the Byzantine lapidary of Michael Psellos.[49]

The lapidary of Michael Psellos, titled *On the Powers of Stones*, was written in the eleventh century.[50] As the only lapidary that was composed in medieval Byzantium, it is one of the most important sources on Byzantine beliefs about gemstones. The text contains entries on the following twenty-four stones: adamant (probably diamond), hematite, amethyst, carbuncle, agate, beryl, galactite, amber, jasper, the "finger of Ida" stone, crystal, lycnite, magnet, onyx, sapphire, sardonyx, moonstone, emerald, hyacinth, chrysolith, chryselectrum, chrysoprase, topaz,

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[47] Vivian Nutton, *Ancient Medicine* (London: Routledge, 2004), 276; Christopher A. Faraone, "Text, Image, and Medium: the Evolution of a Graeco-Roman Magical Gemstone," in Entwistle and Adams, *'Gems of Heaven,'* 50.

[48] *Codex Vaticanus Graecus 1302* has been dated to the twelfth or the fourteenth century and *Codex Vaticanus Graecus 1305* and *Codex Vaticanus Urbinas Graecus 108* date to the fifteenth century. See Richards and Caley, "Introduction," 3-4.

[49] On Pliny's lapidary as a source for Michael Psellos' *On Stones,* as well the other sources from which Psellos drew, see Annibale Mottana, "Storia della Mineralogia Antica I. La Mineralogia A Bisanzio Nel Xi Secolo D.C.: I Poteri Insiti Nelle Pietre Secondo Michele Psello," *Rendiconti Lincei* 16.4 (2005): 227-295. Barry Baldwin acknowledged that Psellos probably used Pliny's *Natural History* but felt that as a Latin source, it could not have exerted as much influence as the Greek sources, among them Theophratsus' lapidary and the lost lapidary of Xenocratus. See Baldwin, "Michael Psellus on the Properties of Stones," 401-404.

[50] Psellos' tract is titled Περὶ λίθων δυνάμεων. See Psellos, *Philosophica minora,* I, op. 34, 116-120. An English translation and commentary is presented in Baldwin, "Michael Psellus on the Properties of Stones," 397-405.

and "chalazias," a gemstone with an unknown identity. The lapidary's focus is on the gemstones' medicinal properties, although one entry includes a brief discussion of the use of a gemstone as a protective amulet. According to the text, some gemstones should be ground and ingested in order to activate their medicinal and protective properties. Others are activated through being worn on the body as an amulet. With brief, direct entries, Psellos' lapidary is in the tradition of the encyclopedic lapidaries of Theophrastus and Pliny. Since much of the text focuses on amulet making and the medicinal properties of gemstones, however, it is clear that Psellos' sources must have also included the magical lapidaries.

Psellos must have been aware that his lapidary might be interpreted as a magical text, for in the preface he stated that he did not know how the gemstones became invested with power. He repeated this disclaimer again at the end of the text, writing, "But let the property and action of each individual stone be enough for you – leave all the theories and explanations among the treasures of heaven, where they belong!"[51] Psellos, who also wrote treatises on alchemy and on the Chaldean Oracles, was well versed in Chaldean theurgy and other ancient arts of an occult nature.[52] His lapidary dwells safely upon the medicinal properties of gemstones, which may have been considered an acceptable topic of discussion because of their practical application. Given Psellos' interest in the occult arts, it should be assumed that he was also aware of the magical properties of gemstones, but chose not to write about them for fear of his personal safety and reputation.

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[51] Baldwin, "Michael Psellus on the Properties of Stones," 399 (text) and 399-405 (discussion). For the Greek text, see Psellos, *Philosophica minora,* I, op. 34, 119: "σοὶ δὲ ἀποχρῶσα ἔστω ἡ ἑκάστου τῶν λίθων δύναμις καὶ ἐνέργεια· τοὺς δὲ λόγους αὐτῶν καὶ τὰς αἰτίας παρὰ τοῖς ἄνω θησαυροῖς ἔασον."

[52] Gianna Katsiampoura, "Transmutation of Matter in Byzantium: The Case of Michael Psellos, the Alchemist," *Science and Education* 17 (2008): 666.

This discussion has demonstrated that the encyclopedic and magical lapidaries were known in Byzantium and would have influenced beliefs about the properties of gemstones. It must be emphasized again that lapidary knowledge would have been transmitted through Byzantine culture through the oral tradition as well. Maria Mavroudi has noted that technical treatises of all types, from the magical to the medicinal, were transmitted orally because they required practical instruction.[53] Lapidaries are very much within the genre of technical treatises, as their main purpose is to instruct the reader in the practical uses of gemstones. Therefore, it should be expected that even those who did not have direct access to lapidary texts would have some knowledge about gemstones.

While it is certain that the lapidary tradition influenced beliefs about stones, understanding exactly what was believed about each stone is nearly impossible to determine. The texts share common elements, but due to their differences in scope, intent, and content, the best that can be understood today is the range of beliefs that existed for each gemstone. I have attempted to obtain this range for some of the gems by compiling the information from the textual sources. The goal of this exercise is to further understand, to the extent that it is possible, how these gemstones were used as amulets.

In all of the texts, lapis lazuli is called sapphire, or *saphieros*.[54] Theophrastus noted only that sapphire is a rare stone that is spotted with gold and can be used for making seals.[55] Pliny provided a fuller description of the stone and its location of origin, and opined that it was

[53] Mavroudi, "Occult Science and Society in Byzantium: Considerations for Future Research," 83-87.

[54] On the identification of the sapphire of antiquity with today's lapis lazuli, see the discussion in Chapter Two.

[55] Theophrastus, *Theophrastus on Stones*, 46-47, 50.

unsuitable for engraving because it contained cores of pyrite, which he called rock crystal.[56] Neither Theophrastus nor Pliny wrote that the stone had properties of a medicinal or miraculous nature. Dioscorides, however, wrote that lapis lazuli could be ingested as a drink to treat scorpion bites and a variety of internal conditions including ulcers, growths of the eyes, and herniated membranes.[57] Michael Psellos repeated Dioscorides' recommendation that lapis lazuli be ingested, with milk, for healing ulcers. He added that it had astringent properties and could bring down fevers and that, when worn on the forehead, it could also treat runny eyes.[58]

Lapis lazuli does not appear in the Orphic Lapidary or the Cyranides, but it is discussed in the lapidary of Damigeron. The entry for lapis lazuli in Damigeron begins with, "The sapphire stone is extremely honored by God."[59] It is then noted that the stone was worn by kings because of its protective qualities, which included the ability to ward off envy, propitiate the divine, and preserve the health and appearance of the body. This is followed by a discussion of the stone's curative properties, which echo those described in the other texts and include the ability to treat internal sores and to heal the eyes when applied as a poultice. Last comes a discussion of the stone's effectiveness in propitiating the divine and in divination. According to the text, lapis lazuli propitiates the "saints of god" during worship and prayer and can be used in divination by water, or hydromancy. It can also used for divination when used as an amulet shaped like a beetle.[60] Although it is not a lapidary, Michael Psellos' commentary on the

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[56] Pliny the Elder, "Book XXXVII: The Natural History of Precious Stones," 432, chap. 39.

[57] Dioscorides Pedanius, *De materia medica*, 395.

[58] Baldwin, "Michael Psellus on the Properties of Stones," 399.

[59] Saphirus uero lapis honorificatus est uehementer a deo." See Halleux and Schamp, *Les Lapidaires grecs,* 250.

[60] "sanctos dei" - For the full passage see Halleux and Schamp, *Les Lapidaires grecs,* 250-251.

Chaldean Oracles should also be noted because he describes a theurgic ritual that involves a golden ball with a lapis lazuli inside of it. This ball, which was called a *strophalos*, was to be swung while making invocations to Hecate. It worked by attracting the *Iynxes,* which in the Chaldean system were entities that connected men with the gods.[61] Psellos' text on the *Chaldean Oracles* may therefore be held as another example in which the lapis lazuli stone is used to facilitate communication with the divine.

The amethyst is described only in the lapidaries of Theophrastus, Pliny, and Michael Psellos. Theophrastus wrote that the amethyst was transparent and wine colored. He also took note of the geodes within which the stone forms, writing that amethyst could be found within other rocks that were split open.[62] Pliny's entry on amethyst is longer. It begins with a discussion of the different types of amethyst and their location of origin, as well as an explanation that the stone received its name because of its purple color, which is similar to the color of wine. Pliny noted that the amethyst has various degrees of translucency as well as a shine that gives off a rosy hue when the stone is held up to the light. He then discussed the stone's magical and medicinal properties in detail, although he attributed this knowledge to the Magi and claimed that it was false. Pliny wrote that stone's main property was to stave off drunkenness, but it could also protect against spells when worn as a consecrated amulet and help supplicants earn favor with kings.[63] Michael Psellos' entry on amethyst is brief; he wrote simply

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[61] Duffy, "Reactions of Two Byzantine Intellectuals to the Theory and Practice of Magic, 85. On the purpose of the *Iynx* and its use in Chaldean theurgy, see Ruth Majercik, *The Chaldean Oracles: Text, Translation, and Commentary* (New York: Brill, 1989), 29-30.

[62] Theophrastus, *Theophrastus on stones,* 51-52.

[63] Pliny the Elder, "Book XXXVII: The Natural History of Precious Stones," 432-434, chap 40.

that it was the color of hyacinth and that it could cure headaches and prevent drunkenness.[64] Thus it is apparent that although Pliny disparaged the Magi's recommendation of the use of amethyst to prevent drunkenness, the belief that amethyst could be used in this manner survived into the Byzantine period.

Hematite is discussed in every lapidary. As explained in Chapter Two, in antiquity hematite probably referred to iron oxide or red jasper. The sources consistently refer to it as having the color and appearance of dried blood. Theophrastus provided only a description of the stone's appearance. Pliny described its appearance and its medicinal properties. He wrote that it could treat health problems that involved blood, such as bloodshot eyes, menstruation issues, and sores. He also wrote that it could treat issues that involved the bladder.[65] Dioscorides' entry on hematite is based directly upon Pliny's text.[66] Psellos wrote that hematite could be used to treat eye diseases, and added that it gave off the color of blood when steeped in water.[67]

The entry in the Orphic Lapidary begins with an explanation that hematite has the appearance of coagulated blood because it is the blood from the wound of Ouranos, the Greek God of the sky. The text then relates that the stone makes water appear like blood, that it can be used to heal wounds and issues of the eyes, and that it protects against snake bites.[68] The Cyranides reiterates the ideas expressed in the Orphic Lapidary, but adds that hematite can make

[64] Baldwin, "Michael Psellus on the Properties of Stones," 398.

[65] For Theophrastus on hematite see Theophrastus, *Theophrastus on stones,* 53. For Pliny on hematite see Pliny the Elder, "Book XXXVII: The Natural History of Precious Stones," 363-364, chap. 37 and 38.

[66] Dioscorides Pedanius, *De materia medica*, 392.

[67] Baldwin, "Michael Psellus on the Properties of Stones, 397.

[68] Halleux and Schamp, *Les Lapidaires grecs*, 117-118.

an individual victorious in court.[69] The entry on hematite in the lapidary of Damigeron includes the belief that the stone could stop hemorrhages, heal the eyes, and treat bladder issues and snake bites. In the two astrological lapidaries at the beginning of the text, hematite is associated with Aries and Mercury.[70]

Heliotrope, which refers to the green stone with red inclusions that is today called bloodstone, does not appear in the lapidary of Theophrastus. Pliny described it in detail, noting that it received its name because of its ability to change sunlight. The stone, when dropped in a basin of water, changes sunlight to the color of blood. Pliny then described the various types of heliotrope and their surface qualities, dwelling upon their ability to reflect light. He added that one type of heliotrope was thought to have prophetic abilities when placed under the tongue, although he dismissed the belief as nonsense. It seems that Pliny may have conflated heliotrope with hematite, for in the remainder of the entry on heliotrope the properties of hematite are discussed, without explanation.[71]

Heliotrope does not appear in Dioscorides' *de Materia Medica*, the lapidary of Michael Psellos, the Orphic Lapidary, or the Cyranides. In the lapidary of Damigeron, however, the heliotrope is described in detail. The text echoes Pliny's statement that the name of the stone came from its ability to change the sun, and the ritual is described in detail. Beyond changing sunlight to the color of blood, the ritual is said to conjure divine presence. The water would become cloudy and the air stormy, to the great terror of everyone who witnessed it. The text then relates that the heliotrope could be used in divination. Last, the stone's medicinal and

[69] Ibid.,124.

[70] Ibid., 232-234.

[71] Pliny the Elder, "Book XXXVII: The Natural History of Precious Stones," 450-452, chap. 60.

protective properties are listed, which include the ability to ensure health, protect the body and the reputation, and dispel fear.[72]

The texts on heliotrope and hematite share some commonalities that suggest that the two gemstones may have been conflated or considered similar. Both are deemed capable of changing water into the color of blood, although the method by which this occurs is different for each stone. In the case of heliotrope, the stone is simply dropped into a basin of water that is held in the sun. For hematite, the Cyranides specifies that the stone should be ground and dissolved in the water. Pliny's entry on heliotrope also digresses abruptly into a discussion of hematite, with no explanation of why the two stones are discussed together. It is likely that the two stones were considered similar because both had the appearance of blood. Sources on heliotrope consistently describe it as having the appearance of dried blood, while those on heliotrope describe it as a green stone with blood-red veins. Hematite was a stone with applications that were more relevant to the physical world, however, while heliotrope's properties were applicable to the realm of the supernatural. For example, hematite had specific medicinal applications, while Pliny did not list any medicinal properties for heliotrope and the lapidary of Damigeron contains only a vague statement that the stone supported good health and protected the body. The heliotrope's most notable property was its miraculous ability to change the sun, which was interpreted as a sign of divine presence. It also had an application in divination.

The lapidary texts have demonstrated that a range of beliefs about the properties of gemstones existed in Byzantium. Most of the stones had specific applications for medicine, and many were thought to have apotropaic properties. Some had supernatural applications that involved propitiating divinities, soliciting the favor of the courts or rulers, and predicting the future. The lapidaries also reveal that the properties of gemstones were activated in a variety of

[72] Halleux and Schamp, *Les Lapidaires grecs,* 234-237.

ways. Some gems were grounded and ingested for their medicinal effects, while others were worn as amulets. Gemstone amulets were sometimes carved with specific images in order to consecrate them. The use of gemstones to propitiate the gods and divine the future typically involved a ritual element.

A fourteenth-century poem written about a stone *enkolpion* demonstrates how the material of gemstone and images of saints who were known as holy protectors could be combined to create an object that is protective in the physical and spiritual realms. The poem, written by Manuel Philes, is as follows.[73]

> Εἰς τὸν προφέτην Δανιὴλ καὶ τὸν μέγαν Δημήτριον καὶ τὸν ἀρχιστράτηγον εἰς δαιμονόλιθον πεποιημένον.
>
> Πέτρᾳ σκεπασθεὶς καὶ λιθοχρόῳ γνόφῳ
> Καὶ κατὰ Μωσῆν τὸν Θεὸν δεῦρο βλέπων
> Αἱρῶ στρατιὰν μυστικῆς τυραννίδος·
> Τὸν γὰρ Δανιὴλ ἅμα τῷ Δημητρίῳ
> Πλάκας νοητὰς, τὸν δὲ νοῦν τὸν ὁπλίτην,
> Σαφῶς Ἰησοῦν εὐτυχῶ στεφανίτην.
>
> On the prophet Daniel and the great Demetrius and the Arch General (the Archangel Michael) made from demon stone.
>
> Shielded with rock and dark-colored stone,
> I behold God according to Moses.
> I take an army of mystical kingly power
> For Daniel together with Demetrios,
> The intelligible (mental) tablets, the mind and the soldier.
> I certainly succeed with Jesus, the one who crowns.

In the title of the poem the material of the *enkolpion* is described as a "demon stone." The demon stone is probably related to the seal ring of Solomon which, according to the legend

[73] Manuel Philes, *Manuelis Philae Carmina: Ex Codicibus Escurialensibus, Florentinis, Parisinis Et Vaticanis*, 138, poem CCLXXXV.

of the "Testament of Solomon," was used to subdue demons.[74] The text of the poem describes the stone as turning dark (λιθοχρόῳ γνόφῳ), much in the way that the complexion of skin changes color. The fourteenth century allegorical poem on the gemstones of "Sophrasune," or the personification of Temperance, lists a "demon stone" associated with King Solomon that is described in similar terms as, "violently darkening in complexion, which Solomon the Great carried in a ring and used to divinely subjugate the phalanx of Demons."[75]

While the material of the demon stone had the inherent power of subduing demons, the *enkolpion* also invoked the help of two protector saints, the Archangel Michael and St. Demetrios, through their images. The stone and the holy figures were both expected to protect the owner of the *enkolpion* against threats posed by demons. The poem also relates that the prophet Daniel, who in the Book of Daniel was saved repeatedly through his intellect and divine inspiration, is tasked with protecting the mind. The stone of the *enkolpion* is said to be a reminder of the stone tablets of Moses, which must have inspired the owner of the *enkolpion* to obey God's Commandments.

In addition to their use as protective amulets, there is also evidence that gemstone *enkolpia* were used as medicinal amulets. In the Vatopedi Monastery, an enameled *enkolpion* set with a green jasper carved in intaglio with an image the Virgin and Child displays an inscription that reads, "You who carry the Logos purely, I carry on my breast for the health of the body."[76]

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[74] Richard P. H. Greenfield, *Traditions of Belief in Late Byzantine Demonology* (Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1988), 273-282.

[75] "Καὶ μελανίζοντα σφοδρῶς τῇ χρόᾳ δαιμονίτην, ὃν φέρων εἰς δαχτύλιον ὁ Σολομῶν ὁ μέγας τὰς τῶν δαιμόνων φάλαγγας ὑπέταξε θεόθεν." See Miller, "Poème allégorique de Meliténiote, publié, d'après un manuscript de la Bibliothèque impériale," 65 (on the demon stone) and 59-65 (for the list of stones).

[76] ΦΕΡΩ CE ΤΗΝ ΦΕΡΟΥCΑΝ ΑΓΝΩC ΤΟΝ ΛΟΓΟΝ ΕΝ CΤΗΘΕCΙ CΩΜΑΤΟC ΟΙC ΕΓΕΞΙΑΝ. For inscription and translation see Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 74, no. 22.

On this object, the medicinal properties of the green jasper are combined with the image of the Virgin to create an object that protects the health of the body. As another example, the frame into which a bloodstone with the image of Christ Pantokrator in the Cabinet des Médailles is set is inscribed in Latin with the phrase, "I remove the efficiency from sorcery and I stop hemorrhages" (no. 65).[77] The Latin inscription indicates that the frame is from the medieval West. Nonetheless, it testifies to the belief that a bloodstone *enkolpion* could be used as a medicinal amulet to stop hemorrhages and to protect the wearer from the dangerous effects of sorcery.

The medicinal function of Byzantine carved gemstones was secondary and probably practiced privately or with discretion. Medicinal amulets were used in the Byzantine period, but some, especially clergymen, regarded their use as characteristic of the superstitious foolishness of women or as the practice of magic. For example, in the funerary oration that he composed for his mother, Theodore of Studion praised her for not using spells and amulets in childbirth as other women were inclined to do.[78] In *Chronographia,* Michael Psellos wrote that the Empress Zoe attempted to cure her infertility by what he described as "magical practices," which included, "fastening little pebbles to her body, hanging charms about her, wearing chains, decking herself out with the rest of the nonsense."[79] According to Psellos, the stones and charms did not work and the empress never conceived a child. The derisive tone of the passage suggests

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[77] "Sortilegis vires et fluxum tollo cruoris." Inscription and French translation in Guillou and Durand, *Byzance*, 281, no. 191.

[78] Dorothy de F. Abrahamse, "Magic and Sorcery in the Hagiography of the Middle Byzantine Period," *Byzantinische Forschungen* 8 (1982): 12.

[79] Michael Psellus, *Fourteen Byzantine Rulers; the Chronographia*, trans. E. R. A. Sewter (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1966), 65.

that Psellos thought that the magical practices that she employed were foolish. Given that he was well versed in the occult arts himself, however, it is possible that Psellos was trying to distance himself from the dangerous practice of magic.

Gemstones that were carved with magical symbols and words had been used as medicinal amulets since antiquity. They are a material testament to the impact of lapidary texts and magical lore upon actual practices in the ancient and medieval worlds.[80] Medicinal amulets continued to be carved from gemstones in the Byzantine period in stones that include bloodstone, green jasper, sardonyx and onyx.[81] All four of these gems were used for the carving of gemstone *enkolpia*, with bloodstone, green jasper, and sardonyx among the most popular stones. The imagery on Byzantine medicinal amulets also overlaps with that of carved gems that were worn as *enkolpia,* as the Virgin, Christ, and the Archangel Michael appear on both object types. On medicinal amulets, images of holy figures are typically combined with phrases or symbols from the magical tradition. This combination of Christian and magical imagery is found on medicinal amulets that date back to the early Byzantine period, which suggests that it was meant to ensure that supernatural assistance was channeled from all available sources.[82] For example, a bloodstone in the Selçuc Museum is carved with an image of the Archangel Michael on the reverse and the *Hysteria*, the personification of the womb, on the reverse. A number of internal disorders were blamed on the womb, which was thought capable of "wandering." The *Hysteria*

[80] Campell Bonner, *Studies in Magical Amulets, Chiefly Graeco-Egyptian* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1950), 51-94. Christopher Faraone, "Text, Image, and Medium: The Evolution of Graeco-Roman Magical Gemstones," 50-61.

[81] Spier, "Medieval Byzantine Medicinal Amulets and Their Tradition," 59-59, Appendix I, Section F, Plates 5-6, nos. 52-59.

[82] Vikan, "Art, Medicine, and Magic," 65-86, esp. 75-79; Spier, "Medieval Byzantine Medicinal Amulets and Their Tradition," 25-62, esp. 28-29.

image was intended to treat these issues by commanding the womb to stay in its place.[83] While the *Hysteria* image was intended to treat the womb through its medico-magical effects, the image of the Archangel Michael on the reverse was meant to solicit his assistance to address the problem of the womb as well. The Archangel Michael's presence on medicinal amulets is directly related to his reputation as a healer and his association with healing springs in Asia Minor.[84]

It was proposed earlier that bloodstone, known as heliotrope, and hematite may have been considered similar or even conflated in antiquity. The fact that several Byzantine medicinal amulets are of bloodstones and none are of iron oxide or red jasper suggests that by the Byzantine period the curative properties of hematite had been transferred to bloodstone. The bloodstone in the Selçuc Museum with images of the Archangel Michael and *Hysteria* is one example of a medicinal amulet in bloodstone that was designed to treat an issue for which the lapidaries had prescribed hematite. A bloodstone amulet carved in intaglio in the Metropolitan Museum is another example (C21). Although it has been dated to the seventh century, Jeffrey Spier has noted its similarities to carved gemstones of the middle Byzantine period and suggested that it belongs to a later date.[85] The obverse is carved with the image of Christ and the Woman with the Issue of the Blood. An inscription recounts in an abbreviated fashion the story recorded in the Book of Matthew, in which a woman suffering from bleeding was cured after touching the hem of Christ's cloak (Matthew 9:20-22). The reverse is carved with image of the

[83] Spier, "Medieval Byzantine Medicinal Amulets and Their Tradition," 42-44 (on Hysteria) and 59 no. 55, and plate 5b.

[84] On the Archangel Michael's reputation as a healer, see Peers, *Subtle Bodies: Representing Angels in Byzantium*, 154-156; Martin-Hisard, "Le culte de l'archange Michel dans l'empire byzantin," 358-359.

[85] Spier, "Medieval Byzantine Medicinal Amulets and Their Tradition," 44n11.

Virgin, who was the patron and protector of Christian women. Although the carving does not display magical symbols or words, it should still be considered an amulet because it solicits supernatural assistance for healing. The bloodstone was undoubtedly chosen because of its healing properties that related to issues that involved blood.

The medicinal applications of bloodstone contributed to its popularity for gemstone *enkolpia*. Many are carved with an image of the Virgin, and it is very likely that some of these were owned by women who hoped that the Virgin's intercession and the healing properties of the bloodstone would cure issues related to blood and the womb, and help with childbirth. These carved gemstones would have served a dual purpose as both personal "icons" and as amulets.

In addition to considering the secondary function of carved gemstones as amulets used for their protective and healing properties, it is worth asking whether any other aspects of their amuletic function were influenced by the Chaldean belief system from which the magical lapidaries originate. The practice of carving a gemstone with a sacred image in order to activate its power stems from the Chaldean tradition, as does the notion that certain stones could be used to propitiate and influence the actions of the gods. This is not to imply that the main reason that gemstones were carved with holy images was to activate their inherent miraculous properties; on the contrary, as objects that functioned primarily as private "icons," they were shaped to the greatest extent by the traditions of Orthodox Christianity and Byzantine image theory. In the context of this discussion of the amuletic nature of Byzantine carved gemstones, however, it is important to investigate their relationship with the Chaldean tradition from all angles.

The idea that a gemstone should be engraved with an image in order to harness its effectiveness as an amulet appears in the Cyranides, the Nautical Lapidary, and the Lapidary of Damigeron. For example, Damigeron relates that the emerald could improve health, increase

wealth, and provide protection. The gemstone could also be used in divination by water. To activate the properties of this gemstone it was necessary to carve it in the shape of a scarab and, on the scarab's belly, engrave an image of Isis.[86] The practice of engraving gemstones with images in order to activate their properties is also mentioned, but not endorsed, by Pliny and Galen.[87]

The notion that gemstones could be used to propitiate the gods is found primarily in the Orphic Lapidary, in which, in the preface, the author relates that he has learned from Hermes the secrets to influencing the gods. In the entry on rock crystal, for example, the author promises that the gods love the stone because of its brilliant appearance and that a visit to the temple with a rock crystal in hand would be met with good favor.[88] Although it is not stated as explicitly, the belief that certain gemstones are especially effective for influencing the gods is also found in the lapidary of Damigeron in the entries on sapphire and topaz, both of which are said to make the gods agreeable.[89]

The belief that certain gemstones could attract the favor of the gods and that carving a holy or magical image onto a gemstone activates its miraculous properties stems from the notion of cosmic *sympatheia*, which in a Chaldean context meant that certain minerals, plants, and

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[86] Halleux and Schamp, *Les Lapidaires grecs,* 166.

[87] As explained earlier, Galen's experiment led him to conclude that a gemstone amulet did not need to be engraved with an image in order to be effective. See Nutton, *Ancient Medicine,* 276; Faraone, "Text, Image, and Medium: the Evolution of a Graeco-Roman Magical Gemstone," 50.
Pliny makes several references to the practice of engraving gems with specific images in order to activate certain supernatural effects, but dismisses them as lies. For example, in his entry on amethyst he wrote that the Magi claimed that emerald can be used to stave off hail and locusts if engraved with the image of an eagle or a scarab. See Pliny the Elder, "Book XXXVII: The Natural History of Precious Stones," 434, chap 40.

[88] Halleux and Schamp, *Les Lapidaires grecs*, 4 (on the introduction), 91-92 (on rock crystal).

[89] Ibid., 250-252, 267.

animal parts were thought capable of attracting deities that had a sympathetic relationship with, or affinity to, those objects.[90] The concept of cosmic *sympatheia* predates Chaldean culture, in fact, and appeared in Greek philosophy as early as the Hellenistic period, in which it was believed that everything in the universe was connected and that certain cosmic elements had a particular affinity with other cosmic elements.[91] In the Chaldean belief system, which was influenced by Platonism, the universe was divided into three levels. The lowest was the material level, which was the earth, then came an intermediate level, which contained the stars and plants, and then came the highest level, which was the immaterial, or "intelligible" level. The Highest God dwelled beyond even the intelligible level. The higher the soul moved up through the levels, the more it escaped the material body and came closer to communing with the divine and attaining enlightenment. The ultimate goal of Chaldean theurgy was to help the soul ascend beyond the material world through rituals, but other applications of theurgic rituals included divination, talisman making, and propitiating the favor of the gods.[92] The magical lapidaries' recommendation that gemstones be carved with images of gods and used to initiate contact with them are aspects of talisman making. The gemstones, manipulated in prescribed ways, were thought to attract the deities that were sympathetic to them, and in return it was hoped that the deities would provide protection, healing, and knowledge about the future.

With this in mind, should the carved gemstones of Byzantium be considered talismans in the Chaldean tradition? In the strictest sense, the answer is no, since they are not formed exactly

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[90] Majercik, *The Chaldean Oracles*, 26-27.

[91] Katerina Ierodiakonou, "The Greek Concept of Sympatheia and its Byzantine Appropriation in Michael Psellos," in Magdalino and Mavroudi, *The Occult Sciences in Byzantium*, 100-101.

[92] The belief system of the Chaldeans is explained in Majercik, *The Chaldean Oracles,* 1-46, esp. 5- 16 on theology, 16-21 on cosmology, and 26-27 for the notion of *sympatheia* and talisman making.

like those described by the magical lapidaries. The lapidaries specify that certain stones should be paired with certain holy figures, but for Byzantine carved gemstones there is no strict correspondence between a holy figure and a particular gemstone. For example, almost all lapis lazuli carvings have an image of Christ, but Christ was also represented on many other types of gems, including bloodstone, amethyst, red jasper, and sapphire. The flexibility with which a holy figure was paired with a gemstone in Byzantium contrasts with the theurgic practices of the Chaldeans, in which the *sympatheia* between material objects and immaterial deities was fixed.

While Byzantine carved gemstones were not fashioned according to the rules of talisman making from Chaldean theurgy, it seems possible that the general belief that carving the image of a holy figure onto a precious stone as a way of honoring them, inviting their presence, and propitiating their favor could stem in part from theurgic principles and lapidary lore. In Chapter Nine, I argued that one of the main reasons that gemstones were chosen as a material for *enkolpia* was because the high value and prestige of the material honored the holy figure. Understood in this way, choice of gemstone for the image of the holy figure is similar to the practice of adorning holy icons with precious materials as a way of giving "gifts" to the holy figure as an expression of devotion.[93] To expand upon this idea, perhaps when the holy figure is actually represented in the precious material, the material becomes, in addition to a gift, an inviting dwelling place that attracts the holy figure's presence. The notion of *sympatheia* could therefore be applied to the workings of gemstone *enkolpia*, although not within the strictures of the Chaldean system. A parallel for this idea in the Judeo-Christian tradition may be found in the Book of Exodus, in which God instructed Moses to build him a tabernacle of precious materials that would be his dwelling place. The people of Israel were asked to give the precious materials

[93] Papamastorakis, "The Display of Accumulated Wealth in Luxury Icons: Gift-Giving from the Byzantine Aristocracy to God in the Twelfth Century," 35–42.

as an offering to God, and precise instructions were given regarding the use of the precious materials in the construction of the tabernacle and temple implements (Exodus 25-26 and 35:1-29). The precious materials of the tabernacle thereby served a dual function as materials that were fitting to honor God and house his holy presence, and as tangible gifts that represented personal sacrifice and devotion.

While it remains an interesting idea to contemplate, it is impossible to prove the extent to which the function of Byzantine carved gemstones can be considered in the tradition of Chaldean talismans because it cannot be determined whether holy presence was invoked in any way through *sympatheia* or simply through the holy images themselves, as sanctioned by the official Orthodox position. It is also difficult to distinguish between these two theories of how matter becomes imbued with divine presence because they are both rooted in the same philosophical tradition. The Chaldean belief system was highly influential to the development of Neoplatonic philosophy, as the Neoplatonists, especially Proclus, held the *Chaldean Oracles* along with Plato's *Timaeus* as their two most important texts.[94] In the eighth century the Christianized Neoplatonic writings of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite were highly influential to the Iconophile John of Damascus in developing the basis for the Orthodox justification of image worship. The justification centered upon the idea that a relationship existed between the image and its prototype because of the likeness between them, and that worship was therefore not directed towards the image in an idolatrous manner, but instead to the divine figure that it represented.[95] This idea is not very different from the concept of *sympatheia* that appears in

[94] Majercik, *The Chaldean Oracles*, 2.

[95] Averil Cameron has demonstrated that through the writings of Pseudo-Dionysius, Neoplatonic thought had a formative impact on the justification for holy images in the seventh and eighth centuries. See Cameron, "The Language of Images: The Rise of Icons and Christian Representation," in *The Church and the Arts: Papers Read at the 1990 Summer Meeting and the 1991 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical*

Chaldean, Platonic, and Neoplatonic thought. Perhaps the best conclusion, therefore, is that the shared belief in the relationship between a material image and an immaterial deity justified the use of Byzantine carved gemstones in a manner that is within the tradition of Chaldean talismans, yet was also compatible with acceptable religious practices of the time.

The final question to explore in relation to the amuletic aspects of Byzantine carved gemstones is whether they were used in divination. As already discussed earlier in this chapter, divination was practiced in the Byzantine court throughout the middle and late Byzantine periods, often in the service of emperors.[96] The use of gemstones in divination rituals is described in ancient and Byzantine texts that include the Book of Exodus, the Greek Alexander Romance, the magical lapidaries, and the *Anecdota Atheniensia*. The texts describe several methods by which gemstones could be used in divination, but crystallomancy, a type of lithomancy according to which the gemstones' reflections of light and color were interpreted as divine communications, is the ritual in which Byzantine carved gemstones were most likely to have been used.

The Alexander Romance describes a divination ritual that involves gemstones in the context of Pharoh Nectanebo's seduction of Olympias, the mother of Alexander. Olympias, hoping to bear a son for her husband Phillip, asked Nectanebo to cast a horoscope for her. Nectanebo withdrew from his garments a little writing tablet engraved with the sign of the zodiac

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History Society, ed. Dana Wood (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1992), 23-34; Gerhard B. Ladner, "The Concept of the Image in the Greek Fathers and the Byzantine Iconoclastic Controversy," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 7 (1953): 1-10.

[96] Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143-1180*, 12; Magdalino, "Occult Science and Imperial Power in Byzantine History and Historiography," 123-130, 37; Mavroudi, "Occult Science and Society in Byzantium: Considerations for Future Research," 76; Greenfield, "Contribution to the Study of Palaeologian Magic," in Maguire, *Byzantine Magic,* 143-147.

and an ivory box within which was a miniature model of the cosmos made with seven stars and eight precious stones. The text describes the miniature cosmos in detail, noting, "The Sun was of crystal, the Moon of diamond, the Mars of hematite, the Mercury of emerald, the Jupiter of air-stone, the Venus of sapphire, the Saturn of ophite and the pointer of white marble."[97] With the use of this device, Nectanebo predicted that Olympias would bear a child that was fathered by a god. Although the divinatory method at use in this story is the casting of horoscopes and not some form of lithomancy, the text is still worth noting because it associates gemstones with divinatory practices and because it implies that the gemstones made the device more effective because they corresponded fittingly with the celestial bodies that they represented. The idea that gemstones are associated with the zodiac is found in the astrological lapidaries in the lapidary of Damigeron, in which specific gemstones are paired with their corresponding zodiacal signs.

In the magical lapidaries, divination is frequently cited as a purpose for which gemstones could be employed. Gemstones are recommended for use in divination in the Orphic lapidary, the Cyranides, and the lapidary of Damigeron. In the Orphic Lapidary only a single stone, called siderites, is said to have prophetic abilities. The Cyranides lists topaz, chelonite, siderite, and emerald as prophetic stones, while the lapidary of Damigeron lists many, among them heliotrope, emerald, topaz, the "diadochos stone," chelonite, hieracite, and sapphire. According to the texts, gemstones were used in several different types of divination rituals. Emerald, topaz, and the diadochos stone were used in hydromancy, or divination by water, while the prophetic abilities of lapis lazuli could be activated either by hydromancy or simply by using the stone as an amulet. The Cyranides and the Orphic Lapidary both relate that siderite was an oracular stone that emitted prophecies vocally. It had to be wet with water, wrapped in linen, and queried with

[97] Pseudo-Callisthenes, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, trans. Richard Stoneman (London: Penguin Books, 1991), 37-38.

questions. Once the lamps were lit the stone would give a vocal response like the cry of a newborn baby. According to the lapidary of Damigeron, the prophetic abilities of the chelonite and hieracite stones were activated when they were placed under the tongue, but the Cyranides relates that one simply had to wear the chelonite stone in order to divine the future.[98] The means by which the heliotrope could divine the future is somewhat obscure. The lapidary of Damigeron relates that it "announces the future by perpetual rivers and singing oracular songs."[99] It is possible that what is being recommended is a hydromantic ritual in which the water came from a special river. Alternatively, the ritual may have been similar to the one for siderites, in which the stone was wet and then gave a prophecy as it dried.

The hydromantic divination ritual recommended in the lapidaries for sapphire, emerald, topaz, and the diadochos stone is most likely lecanomancy. In lecanomantic rituals water was placed within a dish and a diviner disrupted the water or its surface through a variety of methods. The diviner then interpreted the changes that took place as prophecies.[100] Gemstones were used in lecanomantic rituals because they reflected light and color when dropped into the water. Mirrors were sometimes used in lecanomantic rituals for the same purpose.[101] In many ways, the use of gemstones in lecanomancy is similar to the ritual through which heliotrope, or bloodstone, changes the sun. When placed in a basin of water and held in the sunlight, the heliotrope

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[98] Halleux and Schamp, *Les Lapidaires grecs,* 100-103 (for sideris in the Orphic lapidary), 151-152, 157, 165, and 166 (for topaz, chelonite, siderite and emerald in the Cyranides), 236-238 (for emerald in Damigeron), 240 (for the diadochos stone in Damigeron), 248 (for chelonite in Damigeron), 251-252 (for sapphire in Damigeron); 264-265 (for hieracite in Damigeron), 267 (for topaz in Damigeron).

[99] "Praeterea uaticinantur et praenuntiant futura per fluvios perennes et uocaliter per carmina." Halleux and Schamp have explained in footnote 3 that the "perpetual river" may refer to the ocean. See ibid., 237.

[100] On the ritual of lecanomancy and its use in Byzantium see Alicia Walker, "Meaningful Mingling: Classicizing Imagery and Islamicizing Script in a Byzantine Bowl," *Art Bulletin* 90.1 (2008): 42-46.

[101] On the use of gemstones and mirrors in lecanomancy see A. Delatte, *La catoptromancie grecque et ses dérivé*s, (Paris: Librarie E. Droz, 1932), 63.

changed the water to the color of blood through the colored light that reflected off of its red inclusions.[102]

In the lecanomantic rituals that involved gemstones as well as the ritual by which heliotrope transformed the appearance of the sun, the changes in light and color wrought by the gemstones were interpreted as signs of divine presence. The notion that a gemstone's natural properties of shine and reflected color are evidence that it is somehow animated or imbued with spirit is an ancient belief. It is found, for example, in the description of the magnet stone in the *Life of Apollonios of Tyanna*, which was written in the third century. The author wrote that the stone had a radiant shine, which dazzled the eyes during the day and at night gave off light "as fire does." He then attributed the magnet's ability to attract other stones to the "exaltation of mysterious power" that was contained within the light that reflected from its surface.[103]

The belief in the divine nature of the light and color that reflected off of gemstones underlies the divinatory practice of crystallomancy. In crystallomancy, the light and color that reflected off of gemstones are interpreted as signs of future events. Crystallomancy is related to lecanomancy, as both fall under the larger divinatory category of "scrying," in which divinatory predictions are made by observing flashes of light.[104] The various methods of scrying were the most common way that divination was practiced in Byzantium.[105] In fact, the belief in the oracular nature of the light that reflected off of gemstones may explain the significance of the

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[102] Halleux and Schamp, *Les Lapidaires grecs,* 238.

[103] Philostratus, *The Life of Apollonius of Tyana,* vol. 1, ed. and trans. Christopher P. Jones (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), 311-313.

[104] Daniel Ogden, *Magic, Witchcraft, and Ghosts in the Greek and Roman Worlds: a Sourcebook* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 205; Delatte, *La catoptromancie grecque et ses dérivé*s, 26.

[105] Greenfield, "Contribution to the Study of Paleologian Magic," 146-147.

gemstone that was set into the forehead of Emperor Leo VI, "The Wise," in his image in Hagia Sophia. In the thirteenth century, the Russian archbishop Anthony of Novgorod wrote that the gemstone shone through the night in Hagia Sophia. He then associated the Emperor Leo VI with prophecy by adding that the emperor had the foreknowledge, through a manuscript transcribed at the tomb of the prophet Daniel, that the Byzantine empire would endure as long as there was an emperor in Constantinople.[106] By the twelfth century, Emperor Leo VI had obtained the reputation as a sage and a prophet and was credited with writing "The Oracles of Leo the Wise," a book of prophecies on the future of the Byzantine empire that are similar to the apocalyptic texts attributed to the prophet Daniel.[107] Given the emperor's association with prophecy, it is even possible that the gem set into his portrait had an oracular function. At the very least, it must have stood as a symbol of the emperor's prophetic wisdom.

The divinatory method of crystallomancy may have had a special appeal to the Christian Byzantines because it appears in the bible, in the passage in the Book of Exodus in which the Ephod and breastplate of the High Priest of Israel are described. The passage is notable as one of few in the bible in which gemstones are given a practical application. Otherwise, they almost always have a symbolic or eschatological significance. The Ephod was a priestly garment and the breastplate was worn over it. Both were set with gemstones that had a symbolic and ritual function that was ordained by God. On the Ephod, an onyx stone engraved with the twelve names of the sons of Israel was placed on each shoulder piece. The two onyx stones functioned as a memorial for the sons of Israel. The breastplate was set with twelve gemstones arranged in four rows, with three gemstones per row. Each of the twelve gemstones on the breastplate stood

[106] Ehrhard, "Le livre du pelerin d'Antoine de Novgorod," 51; Cyril Mango, "The Legend of Leo the Wise," *Zbornik Radova Vizantoloskog Instituta* 14/15 (1973): 71-72.

[107] Mango, "The Legend of Leo the Wise," 71-72.

for one of sons of Israel and each was engraved with the name of one the Twelve Tribes. It was called the "breastplate of judgment" and it functioned as an oracle. In the biblical text, God instructs the High Priest to use the breastplate when making decisions for the Tribe of Israel (Exodus 28: 6-30).

Since the nomenclature for gemstones did not always transfer easily across cultures and languages, the identities of the gemstones on the breastplate as listed in the original Hebrew text are not known with certainty. In the Greek speaking world of late Antiquity and Byzantium, the identities of the gemstones were known from the writings of Philo of Alexander and Flavius Josephus, Jewish intellectuals who lived in Roman provinces between the first century B.C.E. and the first century C.E, respectively. Both wrote about the oracular breastplate of the High Priest and identified the gemstones as those that were associated with the zodiac. According to Josephus, the gemstones on the breastplate were sardonyx, topaz, emerald, carbuncle, jasper, sapphire, ligurion, amethyst, agate, chrysolith, onyx, and beryl.[108]

Josephus also elaborated upon the oracular function of the breastplate, explaining that the light that reflected off of the gemstones was an indicator of divine presence. During sacrifices, the gemstones on the shoulder pieces of the High Priest glowed when God was present. Before a great battle, the gemstones on the breastplate omitted light to signify that the Israelites would be victorious and that God was present to help them. According to Josephus, in recent years God had been displeased with the Israelites and the gemstones of the breastplate and Ephod no longer

[108] William Reader has suggested that Philo of Alexander and Flavius Josephus identified the stones based upon tradition and cultural knowledge, and not based upon a direct translation of the Hebrew text. See William W. Reader, "The Twelve Jewels of Revelation 21:19-20: Tradition, History, and Modern Interpretation" *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 100.3 (1981): 435-441. See also Jart, "Precious Stones in the Revelation of St. John 21:18-21," 153-154.

shone.[109] Josephus' passage demonstrates that the light that shone off of the gemstones was interpreted as a positive oracle from God. When good news was promised and God was present, the gemstones shone with divine light, but when God was angry and withheld his presence, the gemstones stopped shining.

The gemstones of the Ephod and the oracular breastplate of the High Priest were discussed in Christian commentaries from the patristic era to the Byzantine period. These texts, as well as Josephus' commentary and the Book of Exodus, transmitted the account of God's communication through crystallomancy to the Byzantine period. They also propagated the ancient belief that the light that reflected off of gemstones was a positive sign, while darkness or a lack of reflected light was a negative sign.

The most extensive commentary on the gemstones from Exodus is Epiphanius' *De Gemmis*, the Christian lapidary that was discussed in Chapter Nine. Although Epiphanius described the properties and symbolic meaning of each gemstone in great detail, he did not dwell upon their oracular function. He did, however, connect the light and dark qualities of stones with divine knowledge and the notions of good and bad. In one of the Armenian versions of the text, the gemstones on the shoulder pieces of the Ephod are said to change color to signify future events. The text relates, "Thus, if it (i.e., the stones) became black, it foretold death; and if it was red (it foretold) the spilling of blood and if it appeared white, it was a sign of peace."[110] In the Georgian version of the text, the emerald stone is said to change color as an indication of good and evil. The text relates, "And if it ever appeared blackened in its color, it proclaimed the hue of its sins and the evils of its teaching and if it appeared white, it proclaimed good deeds and a

[109] Flavius Josephus, *The Antiquities of the Jews*, ed. William Whiston, (London: Wordsworth Editions, 2006), 116. Cited in Reader, "The Twelve Jewels of Revelations," 439.

[110] Stone, "An Armenian Epitome of Epiphanius's 'De Gemmis,'" 476.

better and a loving guidance."[111] This passage directly follows one that compares the emerald to the teachings of the priesthood; in this context, therefore, the changes in the appearance of the emerald are interpreted more as a revelation of truth and goodness than as a portent of future events.

Clement of Alexandria discussed the oracular function of the breastplate of the High Priest in *Stromata,* a text on a variety of topics relevant to Christianity. The breastplate is discussed as part of a larger explanation of the symbolic and exegetical significance of the Temple implements. Clement of Alexandria interpreted the oracular breastplate as part of God's divine plan and the crystallomantic prophecy wrought through the twelve gemstones as a legitimate form of prophecy because it was ordained by God. He related the gemstones to the zodiac and the zodiac, in turn, to the Christian cosmos, which was ruled by Christ. He then compared the oracle revealed by the gemstones to the prophecies and teachings of Christ, noting the likeness between the Greek word for oracle, λόγιον, and the word λόγος, which in the Christian tradition stood for Christ the Word.[112] In Clement of Alexandria's exegetical interpretation, the oracles of the gemstones in the High Priest's breastplate were the Old Testament equivalent of the prophecies of Christ the Word, both of which were legitimate types of foreknowledge given by God.

In Byzantine literature, the Ephod and the oracular breastplate are mentioned in the *Christian Topography* of Cosmas Indicopleustes and the *Chronography* of George Synkellos.[113]

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[111] Epiphanius, *Epiphanius de gemmis,* 127.

[112] Clément d'Alexandrie, *Les Stromates. Stromate V,* vol. 1, trans. Alain Le Boulluec and Pierre Voulet (Paris: Éd. du Cerf, 1981), 85-87. Clement of Alexandria's commentary is also discussed in Meier, *Gemma spiritalis*, 85-86.

[113] John Watson McCrindle, trans., *The Christian Topography of Cosmas, an Egyptian Monk: Translated from the Greek, and Edited with Notes and Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010),

In both texts the breastplate and the Ephod are described exactly as they are in the Book of Exodus. George Synkellos also discussed the crystallomantic function of the breastplate, using information that he drew from the writings of Flavius Josephus. He wrote, "the two sardonyx stones which are on the shoulders of the high priests and the twelve stones on his chest were called an 'oracle,' because when they shine brightly they signify success and when they are dark they signify for Israel a terrible outcome in wars and all its other affairs."[114]

The passage in the *Chronography* of George Synkellos, which was written in the ninth century, indicates that the belief that the light that was reflected from gemstones on the breastplate of the High Priest was a positive potent was transmitted to the Byzantine period. In Exodus, God himself gave directions for the construction and function of the Ephod and the oracular breastplate. For this reason, although crystallomancy has similarities to occult practices, it must have been understood as a type of divination that was, in certain contexts, acceptable to God. It may have been viewed as a necessary practice through which the immaterial God communicated with man in the material world in the years before the Incarnation.

A crystallomantic ritual described in a Byzantine manuscript provides further evidence that this method of divination was known and practiced in Byzantium. The ritual is described in a Greek text called "Magical Recipes" in the *Anecdota Atheniensia*, a Byzantine manuscript with texts of an occult nature.[115] The text, titled, "Crystallomancy as a different type of hygromancy,"

155-157; George Synkellos, *The Chronography of George Synkellos: a Byzantine Chronicle of Universal History from the Creation*, trans. William Adler and Paul Tuffin (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002), 156.

[114] Synkellos, *The Chronography of George Synkellos,* 156.

[115] Armand Delatte, ed., *Anecdota atheniensia* (Liége: Imp. H. Vaillant-Carmanne, 1927), 499. Cited in Greenfield, "Contribution to the Study of Paleologian Magic," 147n101.

instructs the practitioner to take a crystal and a child, and have the child raise up the crystal and hold it in the rays of the sun. The practitioner is then instructed to invoke a series of holy names, including the name of Christ. The text promises that if the child sees something good when the stone is held to the light, the practitioner would achieve it. An illustration that accompanies the passage shows a man with his arm on the shoulder of a child (C17). The child holds an oval-shaped gemstone up towards the sun, which is set in the top right corner of the composition. Lines are drawn from the sun in the direction of the gemstone to show that the rays of sunlight are shining towards it.[116]

The passage in Exodus and the Christian commentaries that it inspired provided a Judeo-Christian precedent for the use of crystallomancy, while the ritual described in the *Anecdota Atheniensia* indicates that this method of divination was practiced in the Byzantine period. The crystallomantic ritual, while in the context and tradition of magical texts, even includes the Christian element of the invocation of the name of Christ. For these reasons, the possibility that Byzantine carved gemstones were used in crystallomancy should be considered. The carved gemstones themselves are fashioned in a way that is appropriate for this type of usage, as the polished surfaces of the carved gemstones of the opaque group reflect light while the surfaces of the gemstones of the semi-translucent and sardonyx groups reflect both light and color. As personal "icons," carved gemstones may have been queried for advice about the future as part of private devotional practices. They may been held up to the sunlight or placed before the flickering light of candles. In fact, since candlelight was typically present at churches and shrines, those who may have used their gemstone *enkolpia* in an oracular fashion may not have fully recognized the practice as crystallomancy. It may have been considered, like the oracular

[116] Delatte, *Anecdota atheniensia*, 499-500.

gemstones of the breastplate of the High Priest, as a legitimate way of communicating with the divine through ritual and a holy object.

Since there are few texts that describe the use of carved gemstones in any context, it would be unexpected to find one that describes their use in crystallomancy. The occult nature of the practice would require discretion, even if it were Christianized by the use of a gemstone carved with a holy figure. There is one text, however, on an image of Christ that was used in a divination ritual that I believe describes a carved gemstone. The text is the well-known passage from Michael Psellos' *Chronographia* that describes the Empress Zoe's devotion to her image of Christ Antiphonites. The passage has been discussed by several scholars, but none have connected the image to a carved gemstone or to the ritual of crystallomancy.[117] The translation of the *Chronographia* by E. R. A Sewter may be to blame for the oversight, as in a rather loose translation of the passage he described the image as being "embellished with bright metal."[118] The word "metal," in fact, appears nowhere in the original Greek text. My translation of the passage is as follows:[119]

> Let me tell you, do not trouble yourself about her, in order that I might tell you that she made an (image of) Jesus, fashioning it very accurately and working it in material of various colors, and the image was alive in full. For it indicated by means of colors the things that were being asked, and revealed the things to come. At any rate, from it, she (Zoe) divined many of the things that were to be. Anyway, if something well pleasing had come upon her, or if something vexing had befallen her, she came directly to the image, in the one case giving thanks, and in the other case propitiating it. I, at any rate, beheld her frequently in times of difficulty,

[117] Pentcheva, "Rhetorical Images of the Virgin," 41-43; Pentcheva, *The Sensual Icon,* 184-186; Charles Barber, *Contesting the Logic of Painting: Art and Understanding in Eleventh-Century Byzantium* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 83-86; Duffy, "Reactions of Two Byzantine Intellectuals to the Theory and Practice of Magic," 88-90.

[118] Psellus, *Fourteen Byzantine Rulers*, 188.

[119] Greek from Michael Psellos, *Chronographie ou histoire d'un siècle de Byzance (976-1077)*, ed. and trans. E. Renauld, vol. 1 (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1926), 149-150.

> now on the one hand embracing the sacred image and contemplating it from above, and stringing together the best of phrases and conversing as if it were alive, now on the other hand lying outstretched and enriching the ground with tears, or beating and rending asunder her breast. On the one hand, if she saw it turn pale, she went away looking sorrowful, but on the other hand if, shining by the light of the sun, it revealed a fiery red color, she sent a message straight away to the emperor, announcing these matters and the things to come in the future.

The important difference between my translation and Sewter's is in the first sentence, in which the image and its material are described, but not specified. The Greek text is as follows: "Ἀμέλει τοι καὶ τὸν ἐκείνης, ἵν᾽ὅυτως εἴποιμι, Ἰησοῦν διαμορφώσασα ἀκριβέστερον, καὶ λαμποτέρᾳ ὕλῃ ποικίλασα, μικροῦ δεῖν ἔμπνουν εἰργάσατο τὸ εἰκόνισμα."[120] Sewter translated the text as follows: "She had made for herself an image of Jesus, fashioning it with as much accuracy as she could (if such a thing were possible). The little figure, embellished with bright metal, appeared to be almost living."[121]

The first discrepancy between my translation and Sewter's concerns the size of the image. Sewter has interpreted the word *micros* (μικρός) as an adjective that describes the size of the image as "little," but in fact, when the genitive of *micros* is paired with the infinitive of *deo* (δέω), together they translate to "in full."[122] Understood in this way, the last part of the passage should be translated to, "the image was alive in full." Although this reading removes the certainty that the object was very small, like a carved gemstone, other clues in the text suggest that it was small enough for the empress to hold in her hand. The text relates that Zoe interacted with the image by "embracing" it, with the use of the verb *agkalitzomai* (ἀγκαλίζομαι), and by

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[120] Psellos, *Chronographie,* 149.

[121] Psellus, *Fourteen Byzantine Rulers*, 188.

[122] See entry for "μικρός" in Liddell and Scott, *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1889), 513.

"contemplating it from above," with the use of the verb *katatheoreo* (καταθεωρέω). This invites a comparison to Niketas Choniates' account of Emperor Isaac II Angelos' interaction with his *enkolpion* of the Virgin, in which the emperor is also said to "embrace" the *enkolpion*, with the use the verb *periptusso* (περιπτύσσω) for "embrace," or "clasp," instead of *agkalitzomai* (ἀγκαλίζομαι). Psellos' description of the empress embracing the image and looking at it from above brings to mind a small personal icon like an *enkolpion* or a small carved plaque that the empress could easily hold in her hands.

The second discrepancy between my translation and Sewter's concerns material. In Sewter's translation, it is written that the image was "embellished with bright metal," but the word "metal" does not appear in the Greek text.[123] Psellos' text indicates, instead, that Zoe fashioned the object from a material of variegated color. The participle *poikilasa* (ποικίλασα) is taken from the verb *poikillo* (ποικίλλω), which means, in addition to "embellish," to "work in various colors."[124] Psellos used the same verb in his lapidary to describe the carbuncle, or garnet, in reference to its variegated appearance.[125] Depending upon the amount of light in its environment, the garnet can exhibit multiple shades of red. In a similar manner, other writers have used the adjective related to this verb, *poikilos* (ποίκιλος), to describe the appearance of the rainbow in the Apocalypse of St. John, which encircled the throne of Heaven and had the appearance of an emerald (Revelations 4:3).[126] In both cases, the verb *poikillo* and its adjective

[123] Psellus, *Fourteen Byzantine Rulers*, 188.

[124] Liddell and Scott, *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon,* 651.

[125] "εὑρίσκεται δὲ ἐν ὄρεσιν ἀντιλάμπων ταῖς ἡλιακαῖς ἀκτῖσι. καὶ ποικιλλόμενον μὲν τοῦτον οἱ λιθογνώμονες ἴσασιν, οὐ μέν γε καὶ τὰς δυνάμεις αὐτοῦ μεμαθήκασιν…" Psellos, *Philosophica minora*, I, 116.

[126] James, *Light and Colour in Byzantine Art*, 96-98.

have been used to describe the varied appearance of gemstones. Psellos' choice of the verb *poikillo* to describe Empress Zoe's image of Christ therefore suggests that was referring to a gemstone that either had multiple colors or that could exhibit multiple shades of color depending upon the presence or absence of light. This could refer to many types of gemstones, but one stone that immediately comes to mind is the bloodstone, which typically exhibits several shades of red and green and, due to its reflective surfaces, can appear dark or bright depending upon the light in its environment. The Empress Zoe's image of Christ Antiphonites may well have looked like the bloodstone of Christ that belonged to Emperor Leo VI, which has several deep shades of red and green and surfaces that are polished to a high shine (no. 1).[127]

The manner in which the empress used her image of Jesus is also consistent with the practice of crystallomancy. The Greek text is as follows: "καὶ ἦν μὲν ὠχριακότα ἴδοι, ἀπῄει στυγνάζουσα, εἰ δὲ πυρράζοντα καὶ φανοτάτῃ αἴγλῃ καταλαμπόμενον, διήγγελλέ τε αὐτίκα τῷ Βασιλεῖ τὸ πρᾶγμα καὶ προκατήγγειλε τὸ ἐσόμενον."[128] It relates that the Empress Zoe held the image in the sunlight and observed the changes that appeared on its surface. When it turned a fiery read color (πυρράζοντα) in the light of the sun, the empress interpreted the change as a positive omen about the future and relayed the information to her husband immediately. This description brings to mind the crystallomantic ritual described in the *Anecdota Atheniensia*, in which the gemstone is held in the sunlight and predictions are made depending upon changes in the stone's appearance. It also recalls Josephus' account of the oracular gemstones on the breastplate of the High Priest, which signaled a positive omen as well as God's support when they glowed. The description also supports the theory that the empress' image may have been a

[127] On this gem see Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury,* 86-87, b.

[128] Psellos, *Chronographie,* 149.

carved bloodstone. Bloodstones are partially red, and the lapidaries relate that the red parts of the stone reflected color when the stone was placed in a bowl of water that was held in the sunlight.[129] If Zoe's image was a carved bloodstone like the one that belonged to Emperor Leo VI, it is easy to imagine the empress holding it in the light, asking important questions, and interpreting the reflections that came off of its shiny red surfaces as responses.

The passage also relates that when the object turned pale (ὠχριακότα), the empress was disappointed and stopped interacting with it. Paleness signified the absence of shine, and indicated that the image of Christ was not responding in an oracular fashion as hoped. Given that the light and color that reflected off of gemstones were interpreted as divine presence, the absence of shine also meant that Christ was not present at that moment, which was undoubtedly another reason for the empress' disappointment.

The probability that Zoe's image of Christ Antiphonites was a carved gemstone grows even stronger when the passage that immediately follows is examined. In this passage Psellos wrote about the *sympatheia* of certain objects, stating that perfumes, precious stones, herbs, and magical ceremonies had the "power of invoking deities" by attracting them by their nature.[130] Then, he assured the reader that the Empress Zoe did not practice magic, but "worshipped God in her own way, making no secret of her heart's deep longing and consecrating to Him the things which we regard as most precious and most sacred."[131] Psellos' sudden discussion of magical rituals and sympathetic gemstones and herbs has been seen as "bizarre" and out of context.[132]

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[129] Pliny the Elder, "Book XXXVII: The Natural History of Precious Stones," 450-452, chap. 60; Halleux and Schamp, *Les Lapidaires grecs*, 234-237.

[130] Psellus, *Fourteen Byzantine Rulers*, 188.

[131] Ibid., 188.

[132] Duffy, "Reactions of Two Byzantine Intellectuals to the Theory and Practice of Magic," 89.

Under the assumption that Zoe's image was a carved gemstone, however, the passage follows completely logically to the one preceding it. The idea of a material object being used as a conduit to the divine is rooted in the Chaldean belief in the necessity of ritual and sympathetic objects to mediate the relationship between the material world and the divine.[133] As already noted, Michael Psellos was well-versed in the tenants of Chaldean theurgy and the Neoplatonism of Proclus. In addition to his lapidary, he wrote a commentary on the *Chaldean Oracles* in which he described the concept of *sympatheia* and its applications for making talismans.[134] With his knowledge of theurgic practices, the concept of *sympatheia*, and the properties of gemstones, Psellos must have recognized that the Empress was practicing crystallomancy and using a gemstone to attract the holy presence of Christ. He may have even instructed her in the rituals in which she was engaged. At the risk of accusing the Empress of dabbling in magic, however, Psellos was careful to insist that her activities were legitimate displays of devotion.

The Neoplatonism in Michael Psellos' explanation of how the Empress Zoe's icon of Christ became animated with divine presence has been noted by Charles Barber and Bissera Pentcheva, who connected it with Psellos' explanation of the "Usual Miracle" in his oration

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[133] Bissera Pentcheva has also linked Psellos' Neoplatonism and his knowledge of Chaldean theurgy and the concept of *sympatheia* to his explanation of how the icon of Christ Antiphonites becomes ensouled with divine presence, although she has argued that the icon was a mixed media icon of enamel, metal, gemstones, and pearls, like the icons of the Archangel Michael in the treasury of San Marco. See Pentcheva, *The Sensual Icon,* 183-189.

[134] Polymina Athanassiadi, "Byzantine Commentators on the Chaldean Oracles - Psellos and Plethon," in *Byzantine Philosophy and its Ancient Sources*, ed. Katerina Ierodiakonou (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 237-238; Majercek, *Chaldean Oracles*, 26; John Duffy, "Hellenic Philosophy in Byzantium and the Lonely Mission of Michael Psellos," in Ierodiakonou, *Byzantine Philosophy and its Ancient Sources*, 148.

titled, "Oration on the Miracle that Occurred at the Church of the Blachernae."[135] Every Friday, the veil that hung before the icon of the Virgin at the Blachernae complex was miraculously lifted, purportedly without human intervention. At the moment that the veil was lifted, the icon became animated, or imbued with the divine presence of the Virgin. The miracle was described by an anonymous Latin observer as well as by Michael Psellos in his "Oration on the Miracle that Occurred at the Church of the Blachernae." Both agreed that the veil was miraculously lifted to reveal the icon, but only Psellos wrote that a physical change in the icon could be observed at the moment when it became ensouled with the Virgin's holy presence.[136]

In light of the theory that the Empress Zoe's image of Christ Antiphonites was a carved gemstone, it is significant to note that in Psellos' oration he compared the miraculous icon of the Virgin at the Blachernae to the Ephod and the oracular breastplate of the High Priest.[137] The main purpose of the oration was to justify the use of the miraculous icon of the Virgin to resolve a legal dispute, and in defense of the practice Psellos held that the divine communication and judgments wrought through the icon of the Virgin were superior to oracles and judgments given from God in the Old Testament and to the theurgic practices of ancient Greek and Chaldean culture. For example, he reasoned that if the wheel of Hecate could be used to communicate with a pagan goddess, then a holy icon of the Virgin could certainly work even more effectively

[135] Barber, *Contesting the Logic of Painting,* 61-98; Pentcheva, "Rhetorical Images of the Virgin," 41-43; Pentcheva, *The Sensual Icon,* 183-189. For an in-depth study of the oration itself and Psellos' Neoplatonism, see Elizabeth Fisher, "Michael Psellos on the 'Usual Miracle' at the Blachernae, the law, and Neoplatonism," in *Byzantine Religious Culture: Studies in Honor of Alice-Mary Talbot*, ed. Denis Sullivan, Elizabeth A. Fisher, and Stratis Papaioannou (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 187-204.

[136] Fisher, "Michael Psellos on the 'Usual Miracle' at the Blachernae," 190.

[137] Ibid., 195-196.

to deliver the Virgin's divine judgments.[138] He then praised the judgment of the icon of the Virgin as worthier than even the oracular plate of the High Priest in Exodus, writing:[139]

> Did not the shadow of the law have some more forceful overshadowings? For there was the oracle of judgment, and stones named "Manifestations" and "Truth," and the garments worn on the breast called in the Hebrew language *Ephod* where they were inset, and indeed, the Propriatory fitted upon the Ark of the Covenant within the Holy of Holies regularly received flashes of revelation that were quite divine in origin, but even these are of lesser significance than the manifestations and overshadowings of the Mother of God. Those provided guidance that was obscure, and they changed into various colors, but the symbol that appeared was not entirely clear in every respect. Here, however, the movement for the sake of the truth was a motion that could not be changed, and it was appropriate to the divine in its appearance as well as supernatural in the understanding."

This passage supplies evidence that Psellos knew about the crystallomancy described in the book of Exodus and that he considered the practice legitimate, at least in the context described in Exodus, because it was a method through which God chose to communicate. Psellos concluded, however, that the oracular gemstones lacked the effectiveness of the icon of the Virgin because their communications were imprecise and difficult to interpret. The icon made the Mother of God herself present in the material, and the judgments that she wrought through the icon were therefore supreme. From this comparison, it seems reasonable to suggest that Psellos may have considered crystallomancy a legitimate way of interacting with a carved gemstone icon and that his knowledge of the oracular gemstones of the Ephod and breastplate informed his understanding of Zoe's image of Christ.

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[138] Ibid., and Elizabeth A. Fisher, *Michael Psellos on Symeon the Metaphrast and on the Miracle at Blachernae* (Washington, DC: The Center for Hellenic Studies, 2014), http://chs.harvard.edu/CHS/article/display/5488.

[139] Fisher, *Michael Psellos on Symeon the Metaphrast and on the Miracle at Blachernae.*

If Byzantine carved gemstones were sometimes used in crystallomancy, this would help explain why so many of them are carved with the image of the prophet Daniel. As discussed in Chapter Eight, the prophet Daniel is represented on carved gemstones more than any holy figure other than Christ and the Virgin. His popularity on carved gemstones is surprising because Old Testament figures are represented relatively infrequently on other types of devotional objects. Further, a new iconographic theme for Daniel appears in the twelfth century, in which instead of standing between two lions, he is represented in bust, holding a scroll. In Chapter Eight I demonstrated that this new iconographic theme and the popularity of the prophet Daniel as a subject on carved gemstones could be explained by his reputation as an apocalyptic prophet during the time of the Crusades. Daniel was known not only for his apocalyptic prophecies set forth in the Book of Daniel, but also for apocryphal apocalyptic texts that were penned in his name. The Byzantines, who saw themselves as God's chosen people, interpreted Daniel's prophecies as a promise that during the end times God would send one last Byzantine Emperor who would defeat the enemies and establish a final Byzantine empire that would endure forever.[140] Since gemstones were used in crystallomancy, it is possible that those carved with the image of the prophet Daniel, who was already known for his political prophecies, may have been used as oracles, much like the image of Christ that belonged to the Empress Zoe.

[140] See discussion and notes in Chapter Eight.

Conclusion

In this dissertation I have assembled, analyzed, and dated a large group of Byzantine carved gemstones and explored their typology, subject matter, and function in depth. I have summarized my findings from these efforts below.

The process of dating and analyzing the gems revealed several interesting findings about their production and use. It was found that varieties of jasper were selected most frequently for gem carving and that bloodstone was the most popular stone overall. The rate of survival of Byzantine gems is highest in the twelfth century, and significantly more gems survive from the middle Byzantine period than from the late Byzantine period. As discussed in Chapter Three, the rate of the survival does not translate directly to the rate of production, as one cannot know with certainty how many pieces have been lost over time. Nonetheless, the fact that the greatest number of carved gems survive from the twelfth century suggests that their use was greatest at that time. The varying quality of twelfth-century gems supports this inference, as it suggests that carved gems were made accessible to more people at that time. These findings have led me to conclude that the practice of wearing gemstone *enkolpia* expanded in the twelfth century, an idea that is consistent with our knowledge of the cultural climate and religious practices of the period.[1]

After dating the gems that were assembled, I examined their relationship with carvings of ivory and steatite from the middle Byzantine period. I was able to identify a number of gems,

[1] The twelfth century is characterized by a taste for luxury arts among the prosperous and an increasingly personal form of piety in which the faithful sought salvation through private devotional practices. See A. E. Laiou and C. Morrison, *The Byzantine Economy* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007), 151-160; A. P. Kazhdan and Annabel Jane Wharton, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth centuries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 75-76 and 86-97.

mainly from the tenth and eleventh centuries, that share stylistic and iconographic elements with icons in ivory and steatite. These gems, which are predominantly opaque stones such as japer and lapis lazuli, tend to be larger than average and are carved with a high degree of technical skill. This, coupled with the fact that precious materials were tightly controlled in the tenth century, led me to conclude that in the first centuries after Iconoclasm carved gems were produced for the same imperial and aristocratic patrons that also commissioned icons in ivory and steatite. It is possible that all of these carvings of precious material were initially wrought in the same workshops, or that their similarities can be attributed to their origination in the same artistic milieu. It was also found that by the twelfth century many carved gems exhibit stylistic characteristics that are not found on ivory and steatite carvings of the same period. These characteristics include a linear carving style and heads that project in high relief away from the background. Further stylistic variations could be identified among the different types of gemstones. From these observations I concluded that over time, carved gems developed stylistic characteristics and carving techniques that were specific to their medium and suited their function as *enkolpia*.

The next findings to be discussed concern the function of Byzantine carved gems. With the exception of a few large pieces, most of the gems were worn around the neck as pectoral pendants, or *enkolpia*. Worn in this way, they functioned as private "icons" that were intended to facilitate a devotional relationship between a supplicant and a patron saint. With the exception of emperors, who sometimes wore gemstone *enkolpia* outwardly as pieces of imperial regalia, most people kept them concealed beneath garments. The wearing of a gemstone *enkolpion* with a saint's image was like carrying the presence of the saint at all times, thus ensuring the saint's constant assistance and protection. It was also considered a gesture of devotion because it

demonstrated faithfulness and favoritism towards that saint and because the *enkolpion* was placed directly over the heart, where feelings of love and desire were thought to originate. In addition to being worn, *enkolpia* were also physically handled, usually during prayer.

The subject matter of Byzantine gems confirms that they served a primary purpose as devotional objects. All are carved with religious subject matter and most represent a single holy figure, which suggests that they were mainly used to facilitate a devotional relationship with a patron saint. Most often Christ is represented on carved gemstones, followed by the Virgin. The four main warrior saints, the Archangel Michael, and St. John the Baptist are also represented in significant numbers. These figures were popular subjects on carved gemstones because they were considered to be especially effective as intercessors and protectors. The prophet Daniel is represented on carved gemstones more often than any holy figure other than Christ and the Virgin. His popularity as a subject is surprising because, with the exception of steatite *enkolpia,* he is not represented frequently on other types of Byzantine devotional art. Daniel's presence on stone *enkolpia* is partially explained by his general association with stone, which stems from his prophecy regarding the rock that was cut from the mountain without hands. This prophecy was interpreted as a metaphor of the Incarnation in Byzantium.[2]

After examining Daniel's significance in Byzantine culture, I concluded that another reason that Daniel appears frequently on stone *enkolpia* is because he came to be understood as a patron saint in Byzantium. In addition to being known as an intercessor and a protector, Daniel held the attribute of divinely inspired wisdom. He was also widely regarded for his apocalyptic prophecies, especially the prophecy concerning the eventual triumph of God's kingdom. This prophecy was interpreted to mean that the Byzantine empire would defeat its enemies. I've

[2] This was noted already by Ioli Kalavrezou in *Byzantine Icons in Steatite* (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1985), 82.

concluded that the emergence of a new iconographic image of Daniel as a prophet, which first appears on gems that were carved around the time of the Fourth Crusade, can be connected with this prophecy. Gemstone *enkolpia* with this image were intended to solicit Daniel's assistance for the salvation of the Byzantine Empire as it was increasingly threatened by the Crusaders and the Ottoman Turks.

The devotional function of Byzantine carved gems was also examined through the study of their materiality. Primarily, it was found that the high value and prestige of gemstones made them an appropriate material for the representation of divine figures. A costly and precious gemstone not only honored the holy figure represented upon it, but it was also considered a "gift" that was given in return for spiritual gifts given by the holy figure. It was also found, somewhat surprisingly, that there was no strict correlation between gemstone type and subject matter. This can be attributed to the fact that the meaning held by gemstones was multivalent and flexible. Every gemstone held a range of meanings, associations, and properties that could be evoked in order to demonstrate its affinity with the holy figure represented upon it and its ability to mediate the spiritual relationship between the holy figure and the supplicant. Poems written on the topic of icons and *enkolpia* in stone and gemstone also demonstrate that the materials were allegorized in a variety of ways. Although it is not possible to discuss all of them here, one metaphor deserves mentioning because it recurs so frequently. This metaphor connects the belief in the watery nature of stone, which comes from the lapidary tradition, with Christian metaphors of salvation. The material of the icon or the *enkolpion* thereby becomes like the rock at Horeb described in the Book of Exodus, and "pours out" salvation to the supplicant (Exodus 17:5-6).

Although gemstone *enkolpia* functioned primarily as devotional objects, the fact that they were worn as protective objects indicates that they also had an amuletic nature. Their dual function as "icons" and as amulets is even suggested by their iconography, given the popularity of armed, holy protectors as subjects. The amuletic nature of gemstone *enkolpia* stemmed from beliefs regarding the properties of gemstones that, according to lapidary texts, ranged from the natural to the supernatural. Gemstones were used as amulets in antiquity for this reason, and there is evidence to suggest that the practice extended to Byzantium. Through a close study of the lapidaries and other textual sources, I concluded that gemstone *enkolpia* were sometimes used in a secondary context as amulets for healing and protection in Byzantium.

The lapidaries and other texts also reveal that gemstones were used in divination rituals such as lecanomancy and crystallomancy, while the Book of Exodus describes crystallomancy as a method through which God communicated with the High Priest of Israel (Exodus 28:15-21). According to Flavius Josephus, the gemstones on the breastplate of the High Priest turned bright when a victory for the Israelites was foreshadowed, but remained dark as a sign of God's displeasure and a premonition of trouble.[3] It is intriguing to note that Josephus' account of the oracular breastplate of the High Priest is remarkably similar to Michael Psellos' account of the Empress Zoe's prophetic image of Christ. After translating Psellos' passage, I believe that the empress' icon may have been a carved gemstone. Not only was it used in a manner that recalls a crystallomantic ritual, but Psellos' description also indicates that it was manually handled and that it had a variegated nature. Gemstones are variegated almost by nature, as they typically display a range of colors and hues, depending upon their mineral composition and ability to

[3] Flavius Josephus, *The Antiquities of the Jews*, ed. and trans. William Whiston, (London: Wordsworth Editions, 2006), 116. Cited in William H. Reader, "The Twelve Jewels of Revelation 21:19-20: Tradition, History and Modern Interpretation," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 100.3 (1981): 439.

reflect light. It is likely that Psellos did not explicitly name the ritual as crystallomancy because doing could implicate the empress in the practice of illicit magic.

During the course of writing this dissertation I identified several additional research questions that I was unable to explore because they fell outside of the scope of the study. One especially intriguing question concerns the relationship between the carved gemstones of Byzantium and Rome. Cameos were very popular in Rome, and ranged from large, imperial, "state cameos" to smaller pieces that were worn as jewelry. Many survive today in comparison with Byzantine gems, of which there are relatively few surviving pieces. As the Byzantines saw themselves as the heirs of the tradition and culture of ancient Rome, it is important to ask how their use of carved gemstones was similar to, and different from, that of the ancient Romans.

On a related note, the relationship between early Byzantine gems and those that post-date Iconoclasm also needs further investigation. In Chapter Two, I noted that gems were also carved in relief in the early Byzantine period, but that their iconographic themes differ from those of gems carved after Iconoclasm. The materials and carving techniques also differ, as sardonyx seems to have been favored in the early Byzantine period, while bloodstone and jasper were preferred in the middle and late Byzantine periods. Further research is needed to understand the reasons for these changes, as well as any functional similarities and differences between them.

Finally, Byzantine gems should be compared with carved gemstones from the medieval West. Lapidaries and allegorical texts written in the medieval West testify to the rich tradition of beliefs that surrounded gemstones, while surviving pieces indicate that a wide range of subject matter, iconography, and formal devices were employed in gem carving.[4] It would be intriguing

[4] Gems from Byzantium and the medieval West are presented together in Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen," 45-98 and in Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen in den Sammlungen Italiens," 239-287.

to investigate how Byzantine gems relate to Western gems carved with religious subject matter, as well as to those that functioned as amulets.

To conclude, if one overarching idea can be identified from all of the information that was gathered on Byzantine carved gemstones, it is that they are luxury objects that are associated with imperial use. Some of the largest and most skillfully carved gems bear inscriptions that identify emperors. Others display a symbol that is reminiscent of the *globus cruciger.* Textual sources seem to indicate that gemstone *enkolpia* functioned as pieces of imperial regalia, but it should be assumed that imperial individuals also used them in a private context. The Byzantine emperor had the most access to gemstones and other precious materials, and it serves to reason that the practice of wearing gemstone *enkolpia* originated in the imperial court. Even as gemstone *enkolpia* gradually became accessible to more people over time, large, skillfully wrought carved gemstones continued to be produced for emperors and members of the imperial family.

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List of Byzantine Carved Gemstones Studied in the Dissertation

1. Christ Standing, bloodstone, 4.8 cm high, tenth century
London, Victoria and Albert Museum, no. A. 21-1932
Paul Williamson, ed., *The Medieval Treasury: The Art of the Middle Ages in the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London: V&A Publication, 1986), 86-87, b.

2. Virgin Orant, sardonyx, 3.7 cm high, tenth century
Formerly in the Museo Vittorio in Rome (now lost)
Hans Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," in *Festschrift Friedrich Winkler*, ed. Hans Möhle (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1959), 13 nos. 6 and 7.

3. St. John the Theologian, bloodstone, 3.2 cm high, late tenth century
Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, no. Clm 4453 (set into the Gospel of Otto III)
Hans Wentzel, "Kameen," in *Reallexikon zur Byzantinischen Kunst*, vol. 3, ed. Klaus Wessel (Stuttgart: A. Hiersemann, 1975), 921.

4. St. Paul, bloodstone, 3.5 cm high, early eleventh century
Munich, Münchner Residenz, (set into the Cross Reliquary of Henry II)
Hans Wentzel, "Kameen," 921.

5. St. John the Theologian, material unknown, late tenth century
Formerly in the Cloister of St. Michael in Bamberg (now lost)
Percy Ernst Schramm and Florentine Mütherich, *Denkmale der deutschen Könige und Kaiser* (Munich: Prestel, 1962), 160, table 341, no. 120.

6. St. Nicholas, material unknown, late tenth century,
Formerly in the Cloister of St. Michael in Bamberg (now lost)
Schramm and Mütherich, *Denkmale der deutschen Könige und Kaiser*, 160, table 341, no. 120.

7. The Archangel Michael, material unknown, late tenth century
Formerly in the Cloister of St. Michael in Bamberg (now lost)
Schramm and Mütherich, *Denkmale der deutschen Könige und Kaiser*, 160, table 341, no. 120.

8. St. George and St. Demetrios, blue chalcedony, 2.7 cm high, tenth century
St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, no. ш-361
A. V. Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii v sobraniiakh SSSR: Katalog vystavki,* vol. 2 (Moscow: Sov. khudozhnik, 1977), 120, no. 630.

9. St. George and St. Demetrios, amethyst, 2.8 cm high, tenth century
London, Museum of London, no. A14113
Hazel Forsyth, *The Cheapside Hoard: London's Lost Jewels* (London: Philip Wilson Publishers, 2013), 179; *Museum of London Collections Online,* accessed April 22, 2015, http://collections.museumoflondon.org.uk/Online/

10. Christ Enthroned, green jasper, 1.9 cm high, tenth century
Vatican City, Vatican Museum, no. Vat. 816
Romolo Righetti, "Le opere di Glittica dei Musei Annessi alla Biblioteca Vaticana," *Rendiconti,* 27, Atti della Pontificia Accademia romana di archeologia, ser. 3. (Rome: Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1953), 335, table IX, no. 3.

11. Christ Pantokrator, amethyst, 2 cm high, eleventh century
Paris, Louvre Museum, no. AC 919
André Guillou and Jannic Durand, *Byzance et les images: cycle de conférences organisé au musée du Louvre par le Service culturel du 5 octobre au 7 décembre 1992* (Paris: La Documentation française, 1994), 278, no. 186.

12. Crucifixion, sardonyx, 6.8 cm high, tenth century
Moscow, The Moscow Kremlin Museums, no. 14181
Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 120, no. 630; I. A. Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities: Works of Art from the Fourth to Fifteenth Centuries in the collection of the Moscow Kremlin Museums* (Moscow: Moscow Kremlin Museums, 2013)*,* 200-202, no. 27.

13. St. John the Theologian, green jasper, 4.2 cm high, late tenth or early eleventh century
Paris, Cabinet des Médailles, no. Babelon 341
Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 280, no. 188.

14. St. Nicholas, green jasper, 5.8 cm high, late tenth or early eleventh century
Lyon, Musée des Beaux Arts, no. A. 1549
Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 279, no. 187.

15. St. John the Baptist, bloodstone, 4.6 cm high, late tenth or early eleventh century
Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, no. ANSA IXa 20
Fritz Eichler and Ernst Kris, *Die Kameen im Kunsthistorischen Museum: beschreibender Katalog* (Vienna: A. Schroll, 1927), 94, no. 127.

16. St. Demetrios, bloodstone, 4.1 cm high, late tenth or early eleventh century
Vatican City, Vatican Museum
Righetti, "Le opere di Glittica dei Musei Annessi alla Biblioteca Vaticana," 332, table V, no. 2.

17. Christ Pantokrator, bloodstone, 4.4 cm high, late tenth or early eleventh century
Paris, Cabinet des Médailles, no. Babelon 334.
Guillou and Jannic Durand, *Byzance,* 281, no. 190.

18. Christ Pantokrator, bloodstone, 2.7 cm high, late tenth or early eleventh century
London, The Victoria and Albert Museum, A. 160 1978
Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury,* 86-87, c.

19. Christ Pantokrator, bloodstone, 2.6 cm high, late tenth or early eleventh century
Vatican City, Vatican Museum, no. Vat. 806

Hans Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen in den Sammlungen Italiens," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 7 (1956): 271, table B. no. 5.

20. Christ Pantokrator, bloodstone, 8.5 cm high, late tenth or early eleventh century
Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Museum, no. 28-128-575
Ljubica Popovich, "A Byzantine Cameo," *Expedition* 4.3 (1962): 29.

21. Christ Standing, bloodstone, 8.8 cm high, early eleventh century
Moscow, The Moscow Kremlin Museums, no. 554/соб
Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 120, no. 631; Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities*, 204-205, no. 28.

22. Christ Standing, lapis lazuli, 11.5 cm high, early eleventh century
Moscow, The Moscow Kremlin Museums, no. 555/шб
Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 122, no. 635; Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities*, 207-209, no. 29.

23. Christ Pantokrator, bloodstone, 3 cm high, early eleventh century
St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, No. ш-353
Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 120, no. 634; A. V. Bank, *Byzantine Art in the Collections of Soviet Museums* (St. Petersburg: Aurora Art Publishers, 1977), nos. 164-165.

24. Christ Pantokrator, bloodstone, 4.2 cm high, eleventh century
St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, no. ш-1215
Yuri, Piatnitsky et al., eds. *Sinai, Byzantium, Russia: Orthodox Art from the Sixth to the Twentieth Century* (London: The Saint Catherine Foundation, 2000), 98, no. B-78.

25. Christ Pantokrator, bloodstone, 4.5 cm high, eleventh century
Mt. Athos, Vatopedi Monastery
G. Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Katia Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Brigitte Pitarakis, *Enkolpia: the Holy and Great Monastery of Vatopaidi* (Mount Athos: Holy and Great Monastery of Vatopaidi, 2001), 42-43, no. 7.

26. Christ Pantokrator, bloodstone, 5 cm high, eleventh century
London, British Museum, no. 18,690,301.94.
O. M. Dalton, *Catalogue of the Engraved Gems of the Post-Classical Periods in the Department of British and Mediaeval Antiquities and Ethnography in the British Museum* (London: Printed by order of the Trustees, 1915), 2, no. 8.

27. Christ Enthroned, bloodstone, 3.3 cm high, eleventh century
St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, no. ш-1208
Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 124, no. 644.

28. Christ Pantokrator, bloodstone, 2.7 cm high, eleventh century
Moscow, Moscow State Historical Museum, no. x 53151/72.
Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 124, no. 643.

29. Christ Pantokrator, amethyst, eleventh century

Kruszyn, Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary Queen of Poland
Miroslaw Piotr Kruk, "The Byzantine gem with Christ Pantocrator from the church of the Virgin Mary Queen of Poland in Kruszyn," *Acta Musei Apulensis* 51 (2014): 25-38, no. 2.

30. St. Peter and St. Paul, nephrite, 2.3 cm high, eleventh century
Karlsruhe, Münzkabinett of the Badisches Landesmuseum, no. 104479/79.
Jenny Albani, "The Cameo with the Apostles Peter and Paul in Karlsruhe," in *Lampedon: Aphieroma ste mneme tes Doula Mourike,* ed. M. Aspra-Bardabake (Athens: EMP, 2003), 25-30.

31. St. Theodore, amethyst, 3.3 cm high, eleventh century
London, Victoria and Albert Museum, 779A-1891

32. The Archangel Michael, sapphire, 3 cm high, eleventh century
Sergiev Posad, Trinity Sergius Monastery, no. 2461
Mikhail Andreevich Il′in, *Zagorsk: Trinity Sergius Monastery* (Moscow: Sovietsky Khudozhnik Pub. House, 1967), 51, no. 39.

33. Crucifixion, sapphire, eleventh century
Prague, St. Vitus Treasury (mounted in the Crown of St. Wencelas)
Wentzel, "Kameen," 922.

34. Christ Standing, amethyst, 2.2 cm high, eleventh century
Paris, Cabinet des Médaills, no. Babelon 332
Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 278, no. 185.

35. Christ Enthroned, chrysoprase, 6.6 cm, eleventh century
Vatican City, Vatican Museum
Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen in den Sammlungen Italiens," 271, table B, no. 3.

36. Christ Pantokrator, rock crystal, 5 cm high, eleventh century
Athens, Benaki Museum, no. 2113
Robin Cormack and Maria Vasilakē, *Byzantium, 330-1453* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2008), 230-231, no. 203; *Benaki Museum Collections,* accessed Sept. 16, 2012, http://www.benaki.gr/index.asp?id=1010102&lang=en.

37. Christ Standing, bloodstone, 4.5 cm high, eleventh century
St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, no. ш-359
Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 121, no. 632.

38. Virgin Orant, bloodstone, 4.5 cm high, eleventh century
St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, no ш-358
Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 121, no. 633.

39. Christ Standing and the Virgin Orant, nephrite, 4.6 cm high, eleventh century
Athens, Benaki Museum, no. 13511

Benaki Museum Collections, accessed Sept. 16, 2012,
http://www.benaki.gr/index.asp?id=1010102&lang=en

40. Christ Pantokrator, bloodstone, 3 cm high, eleventh century
Vatican City, Vatican Museum, no. Vat. 801
Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen in den Sammlungen Italiens," 271, table B, no. 4.

41. Virgin Orant, serpentine, 17.6 cm in diameter, eleventh century (1078- 1081)
London, Victoria and Albert Museum, no. I. 1927
David Buckton, *Byzantium: Treasures of Byzantine Art and Culture in British Collections* (London: British Museum Press, 1994), 158 no. 171; Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury*, 90.

42. Virgin Orant, bloodstone, 6.1 cm high, eleventh century
Washington, DC, Dumbarton Oaks, no. BZ.1940.70
Kirin Asen, James Nelson Carder, and Robert S. Nelson, *Sacred Art, Secular Context: Objects of Art from the Byzantine Collection of Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C.* (Athens, GA: Georgia Musuem of Art, 2005), 60, no. 4.

43. Virgin Orant, bloodstone, 2.3 cm high, eleventh century
Houlton, Maine, The Content Family Collection
Martin Henig, *The Content Family Collection of Ancient Cameos* (Oxford, England: Ashmolean Museum, 1990), 122, no. 194.

44. Virgin Orant, bloodstone, 3 cm high, eleventh century
Cleveland, Private Collection of William M. Milliken
Wentzel, "Kameen," 917; Carmen Gómez-Moreno, *Medieval Art from Private Collections: a Special Exhibition at The Cloisters, October 30, 1968 through January 5, 1969* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1968), 211.

45. Virgin Hagiosoritissa, bloodstone, 5.7 cm high, late eleventh century
Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery, no. 42.5
Dorothy Eugenia Miner, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art: an Exhibition Held at the Baltimore Museum of Art, April 25-June 22* (Baltimore: Trustees of the Walters Art Gallery, 1947), 114, no. 555

46. The Archangel Michael, bloodstone, 4.2 cm high, eleventh century
Paris, Cabinet des Médailles, no. Schl. 28
Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 280, no. 189.

47. The Archangel Michael, bloodstone, 5.8 cm high, eleventh century
Mt. Athos, Vatopedi Monastery
Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 50-51, no. 13.

48. Crucifixion, bloodstone, 6.2 cm high, eleventh century
London, Victoria and Albert Museum, A. 77 1937
Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury,* 86-87 d.

49. Virgin Hagiosoritissa, green jasper, 2.2 cm high, late eleventh century
Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, no. ANSA XII 748
Eichler and Kris, *Die Kameen im Kunsthistorischen Museum,* 97 no. 134.

50. Virgin Hagiosoritissa, bloodstone, 6.8 cm high, late eleventh century
Riggisberg, Abegg-Stiftung Museum, no. CH-3132
S. Trumpler, "Die byzantinische Marienkamee der Abegg-Stiftung in Riggisberg," *Zeitschrift für schweizerische Archäologie und Kunstgeschichte* 43 (1986): 9.

51. Virgin Orant, red jasper, 6.4 cm high, late eleventh century
London, British Museum, no. 18,690,712.40
David Buckton, *Byzantium: Treasures of Byzantine Art and Culture from British Collections* (London: British Museum Press, 1994), 158-159, no. 172.

52. Virgin Blachernitissa, bloodstone, 4.4 cm high, twelfth century
London, Victoria and Albert Museum, no. A. 4 1982
Williamson, *The Medieval Treasury,* 86-87, a.

53. Virgin Blachernitissa, blue chalcedony, 3.5 cm high, twelfth century
Moscow, The Moscow Kremlin Museums, no. MP-3243.
Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 212-213, no. 31.

54. Virgin Blachernitissa, sardonyx, 2.9 cm high, late eleventh or twelfth century
Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, no. ANSA IX a 12
Eichler and Kris, *Die Kameen im Kunsthistorischen Museum*, 94, no. 126.

55. Virgin Enthroned, lapis lazuli, 7 cm high, twelfth century
Moscow, The Moscow Kremlin Museums, no. 611/соб
Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 124 no. 642; Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities*, 216-217.

56. Christ Standing and the Virgin Orant, lapis lazuli, 8.3 cm high, late eleventh or early twelfth century
Paris, Louvre Museum, no. MR 95
Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 284, no. 195.

57. Christ Pantokrator, lapis lazuli, 1.9 cm high, eleventh century
Paris, Cabinet des Médailles, no. Schl. 284

58. Christ Pantokrator, bloodstone, 4.8 cm high, eleventh century
Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, ANSA XII 827
Eichler and Kris, *Die Kameen im Kunsthistorischen Museum*, 95, no. 128.

59. Christ Pantokrator, bloodstone, eleventh or twelfth century
Aosta, Aosta Cathedral, (set into the arm reliquary of St. Orso)

Vittorio Viale and Mercedes Viale Ferrero, *Aosta romana e medievale* (Torino: Istituto Bancario San Paolo di Torino, 1967), 122, table 12; Edoardo Brunod, *La Collegiata di S. Orso* (Aosta: Museumeci, 1977), 199.

60. Christ Pantokrator, lapis lazuli, eleventh century
Moscow, The Moscow Kremlin Museums, no. ДК-139
Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 219-220, no. 34

61. Christ Pantokrator, agate, eleventh or twelfth century?
Mt. Athos, Vatopedi Monastery
Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 60-61, no. 16.

62. Christ and the Virgin, bloodstone, twelfth century
Mt. Athos, Vatopedi Monastery
Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 54-55, no. 14

63. Christ Pantokrator, blue quartz, 2.9 cm high, eleventh or twelfth century
London, British Museum, no. 18,690,712.10
Dalton, *Catalogue of the Engraved Gems of the Post-Classical Periods in the Department of British and Mediaeval Antiquities,* 2, no. 9.

64. Christ Pantokrator, bloodstone, 2.6 cm high, eleventh or twelfth century
Paris, Cabinet des Médailles, no. Schl. 283.
Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 286, no. 200.

65. Christ Pantokrator, bloodstone, 3.2 cm high, twelfth or thirteenth century
Paris, Cabinet des Médailles, no. Babelon 333
Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 281, no. 191.

66. Christ Pantokrator, bloodstone, twelfth century
Mt. Athos, Vatopedi Monastery
Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 76-77, no. 23.

67. Christ Pantokrator, nephrite, 5 cm high, twelfth century
Moscow, The Moscow Kremlin Museums, no. ДК-134
Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 226-227, no. 37.

68. Christ Pantokrator, bloodstone, twelfth century
Mt Athos, Vatopedi Monastery
Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 80-81, no. 24.

69. Christ Pantokrator, bloodstone, 3 cm high, twelfth century
Stockholm, Swedish History Museum (mounted in the "Elizabeth reliquary")
Hans Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen, Versuch einer Grundlegung," *Zeitschrift des deutschen Vereins für Kunstwissenschaft* 8 (1941): 64, no. 22.

70. Christ Pantokrator, bloodstone, 2.6 cm high, twelfth century

Paris, Louvre Museum, no. MRR 220.
Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 439, no. 331

71. Virgin Hagiosoritissa, bloodstone, 3.5 cm high, early twelfth century
Washington, DC, Dumbarton Oaks, no. BZ.1936.31
Asen, Carder, and Nelson, *Sacred Art, Secular Context,* 61, no. 6.

72. Virgin Hagiosoritissa, bloodstone, early twelfth century
Cividale del Friuli, The Christian Museum and Treasure of the Cathedral of Cividale
Gino Fogolari, *Cividale del Friuli* (Bergamo: Istituto italiano d'arti grafiche, 1906) 115-116.

73. Virgin Hagiosoritissa, bloodstone, early twelfth century
Léon, Catedral de Léon
Manuel Gómez-Moreno, *Provinca de León (1906-1908)* (Madrid: Ministerio de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, 1925/1926), 282, no. 388.

74. Virgin Enthroned, bloodstone, 3.7 cm high, early twelfth century
Berlin, Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum
W. F. Volbach, *Mittelalterliche Bildwerke aus Italien und Byzanz* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1930), 125, no. 2737.

75. Virgin Enthroned, sapphire, 4.1 cm high, early twelfth century
Moscow, The Moscow Kremlin Museums, no. Ж-622/2
Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 221-223, no. 35.

76. John the Baptist, bloodstone, 3.3 cm high, eleventh century
s'Gravenhage (collection unknown)
Hans Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel. Zur Problematik der Datierung byzantinischer Gemmen" in *Mouseion, Studien aus Kunst und Geschichte: Festschrift Otto H. Förster,* ed. Heinz Ladendorf and Horst Vey *(*Cologne: DuMont Schauberg, 1960), 96n89, no. 89.

77. Virgin Hodegetria and John the Baptist, bloodstone, 4.2 cm high, late eleventh century or early twelfth century
Vatican City, Vatican Museum, no. Vat. 811
Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen in den Sammlungen Italiens," 271, table B, nos. 10 and 12.

78. Virgin Hodegetria, bloodstone, 4.6 cm high, eleventh or twelfth century
Berlin, Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum
Volbach, *Mittelalterliche Bildwerke aus Italien und Byzanz*, 125, no. 763.

79. Virgin Hodegetria, bloodstone, 4.1 cm high, late eleventh or twelfth century
Paris, Cabinet des Médailles, no. Babelon 339
Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 286, no. 199.

80. Virgin Hodegetria, bloodstone, 3.6 cm high, twelfth century

London, British Museum, no. 1874,1701.1
Dalton, *Catalogue of the Engraved Gems of the Post-Classical Periods in the Department of British and Mediaeval Antiquities,* 3, no. 13.

81. Virgin Hodegetria, bloodstone, eleventh century
Mt. Athos, Vatopedi Monastery
Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 56-57, no. 15.

82. John the Baptist, green jasper, 4.5 cm high, eleventh or twelfth century
St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, no. KAM 75
Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 124, no. 639.

83. St. George, sardonyx, eleventh or twelfth century
Mt. Athos, Vatopedi Monastery
Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 44-45, no. 8.

84. St. George, sapphire, 2.9 cm high, eleventh or twelfth century
Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, no. ANSA X 12
Eichler and Kris, *Die Kameen im Kunsthistorischen Museum*, 95-96, no. 130.

85. St. George, bloodstone, 3.9 cm high, eleventh or twelfth century
Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, no. ANSA IXa 21
Eichler and Kris, *Die Kameen im Kunsthistorischen Museum*, 95, no. 129.

86. St. Demetrios, red jasper, 3.1 cm high, eleventh or twelfth century
Paris, Cabinet des Médailles, no. Babelon 343
Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 282, no. 192.

87. St. George, agate, 3.5 cm high, twelfth century
Moscow, The Moscow Kremlin Museums, no. 15386/oxp
Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 123, no. 638; Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities*, 210-211, no. 30.

88. St. George, bloodstone, 3.2 cm high, twelfth century
Cleveland, Cleveland Museum, no. 1959.41
Holger A. Klein, *Sacred Gifts and Worldly Treasures: Medieval Masterworks from the Cleveland Museum of Art* (Cleveland: Cleveland Museum of Art, 2007) 79, no. 21.

89. Rider Saint, nephrite, 3.5 cm high, twelfth century
Munich, Münzsammlung zu Münich
Hans Wentzel, "Die Mittelalterlichen Gemmen der Staatlichen Münzsammlung zu München," *Münchner Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst* 8 (1957): 54, no. 25.

90. St. George, sardonyx, 5 cm high, twelfth century
Florence, Bargello National Museum, no. 1236 C
Arti del Medio Evo e del Rinascimento: omaggio ai Carrand, 1889-1989: Museo nazionale del Bargello, 20 marzo-25 giugno 1989 (Florence: Studio per edizioni scelte, 1989), 265, no. 50.

91. The Archangel Michael, sardonyx, 4.3 cm high, twelfth century
Kassel, Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel, no. B XVI, Tab. B-II-28
Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 92, no. 83.

92. Daniel between the lions, sardonyx, 2.6 cm high, twelfth century
Turin, Galleria Sabauda, no. 133
Giovanna Castagnoli, *Dagli ori antichi agli anni Venti: le collezioni di Riccardo Gualino* (Milan: Electa, 1982), 229, no. 42.

93. Daniel between the lions, sardonyx, 4.4 cm high, twelfth century
St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, no. ш-368
Alisa Bank, "Vier byzantinisierende Kameen aus der Ermitage," in *Beiträge zur Kunst des Mittelalters: Festschrift für Hans Wentzel zum 60. Geburtstag,* ed. Rüdiger Becksmann (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 1975), 14, no. 3; Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 3, 37, no. 919.

94. The Prophet Daniel, sardonyx, twelfth or thirteenth century
Formerly in the Sacristy of the Patriarch in Moscow (now lost)
F. du Mély, "Le trésor de la Sacristie des patriarches de Moscou," in *Monuments et Mémoires* (Paris: Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, 1905), 208, no. 3.

95. Daniel between the lions, sardonyx, 2.4 cm high, eleventh or twelfth century
St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, no. ш-360
Bank, "Vier byzantinisierende Kameen aus der Ermitage," 15, no. 5; Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 3, 37, no. 922.

96. Daniel between the lions, sardonyx, 2.1 cm high, eleventh or twelfth century
Cividale del Friuli, The Christian Museum and Treasure of the Cathedral of Cividale (mounted into the "La Pace Grimani")
G. Menis, "Un malnoto cammeo cividalese con Daniele fra i leoni vestito alla persima," *Rivista di archeologia cristiana* 49 (1973): 187-189.

97. Daniel between the lions, sardonyx, 2.6 cm high, eleventh or twelfth century
London, British Museum, no. 1983, 0703.1
Paul Williamson, "Daniel between the lions," *Jewellery Studies* 1 (1983-4): 37-39.

98. The Archangel Michael, blue chalcedony, 3.8 cm high, twelfth century
Prague, St. Vitus Treasury
Jaroslav Bauer, "The Reliquary Coronation Cross from the St. Vitus Treasury," *Technologia Artis* 2 (1992): 1.

99. The Archangel Michael, blue chalcedony, twelfth century
Washington, D.C., The Hillwood Mansion, no. 11.223 (set into the Buch Chalice)
The Buch Chalice is published in Karen Kettering, "The Northern Palmyra: Saint Petersburg at Three Hundred," *The Magazine Antiquities* 163.3 (2003): 98.

100. St. Basil, blue chalcedony, 2.1 cm high, twelfth century
St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, no. ш-362
Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 120, no. 629

101. St. Nicholas, blue chalcedony, 2.8 cm high, twelfth century
Paris, Louvre Museum, no. MR 84
Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 287, no. 201.

102. St. Nicholas, blue chalcedony, 2.2 cm high, twelfth century
Vladimir, The Vladimir and Suzdal Museum of History, Art, and Architecture, no. B-1691
V. G. Pucko, "Neskol'ko vizantijskich kamej iz drevnerusskich gorodov," *Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta* 12 (1970): 129-130, no. 12.

103. St. Nicholas, sardonyx, 3 cm high, twelfth century
Moscow, The Moscow Kremlin Museums, no. 1851/ oxp
Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 123, no. 636; Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities*, 230-233, no. 39.

104. St. John the Baptist, sapphire, 2.6 cm high, twelfth century
Paris, Louvre Museum, no. MS 91
Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 287, no. 202.

105. Christ Pantokrator, sapphire, 3.3 cm, twelfth century
Washington, D.C., Dumbarton Oaks, no. BZ.1936.17
Asen, Carder, and Nelson, *Sacred Art, Secular Context,* 59, no. 3.

106. Christ Pantokrator, amethyst, 3 cm high, twelfth century
Geneva, Phoenix Ancient Art no. 18197 (Formerly in the Bela Hein Collection)
David Talbot Rice, *Masterpieces of Byzantine Art: Catalogue of Exhibits* (Edinburgh: University Press, 1958), 62, no. 185.

107. Christ Pantokrator, bloodstone, 3.4 cm high, twelfth century
Moscow, Moscow State Historical Museum, no. OK 67508
Pucko, "Neskol'ko vizantijskich kamej iz drevnerusskich gorodov," 123, no. 7.

108. Christ Pantokrator, sapphire, 2.2 cm high, twelfth century
Sergiev Posad, Trinity Sergius Monastery, no. 2461
T. V. Nikolaeva, Proizvedeniia melkoĭ plastiki XIII-XVII vekov v sobranii Zagorskogo muzeia: katalog (Zagorsk: Zagorskiĭ gos. istoriko-khudozhestvennyĭ muzeĭ-zapovednik, 1960), 245-246, no. 116a; V. P. Darkevich, *Svetskoe iskusstvo Vizantii: proizvedeniia vizantiĭsk. khudozh. remesla v Vost. Evrope X-XIII* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1975), 289, no. 412.

109. Christ Emmanuel, sapphire, 2.5 cm high, twelfth century?
Formerly in the Cini Collection in Venice (now lost), no. 1914
Wentzel, "Kameen," 917.

110. Christ Emmanuel, blue chalcedony, 2.5 cm high, twelfth century

Novgorod, Novgorod Historical Architectural Museum, no. 774
Pucko, "Neskol'ko vizantijskich kamej iz drevnerusskich gorodov," 123 no. 2; Vladimir Gormin and Liudmila Yarosh, *Novgorod: Art Treasures and Architectural Monuments, 11th-18th Centuries* (St. Petersburg: Aurora Art Publishers, 1984), no. 146.

111. Christ Standing, red jasper, eleventh century
Formerly in the Sacristy of the Monastery of the Nativity in Vladimir (now lost)
Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities*, 204.

112. St. Demetrios, sapphire, 1.6 cm high, twelfth century
Kassel, Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel, no. B XVI, Tab. B-II-34
Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 90, no. 87.

113. Virgin Orant, amethyst, 1.8 cm high, twelfth century
Kassel, Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel, no. B XVI, Tab. B-II-13
Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 90, no. 82.

114. The Prophet Daniel, sardonyx, twelfth century
Mt. Athos, Vatopedi Monastery
Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 52-53, no. 13.

115. St. Marina, sapphire, 2.8 cm high, twelfth century
Moscow, Moscow State Historical Museum, no. 77586
Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 124, no. 641.

116. Virgin Nikopoios, blue chalcedony, 3.6 cm high, twelfth century
Moscow, The Moscow Kremlin Museums, no. ДК-128
Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 214-215, no. 32.

117. Virgin Orant, bloodstone, 2.9 cm, twelfth century
Paris, Louvre Museum, no. MRR 219
Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 283, no. 194.

118. John the Baptist and St. George, bloodstone, 4 cm high, late twelfth century
Formerly in the Cini Collection in Venice (now lost), no. 1833
Wentzel, "Datierte und datierbare byzantinische Kameen," 10-12, nos. 2 and 3; Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 93, nos. 91 and 92.

119. John the Baptist, red jasper, 4.7 cm high, thirteenth century
Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery, no. 42.1405
Miner, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art*, 114 ,no. 559.

120. Christ Pantokrator, bloodstone, twelfth century
Mt. Athos, Vatopedi Monastery
Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 82-83, no. 25.

121. Christ Pantokrator, bloodstone, 4.3 cm high, late twelfth century
Kassel, Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel, no. B XVI, Tab. B-II-14
Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 90, no. 80.

122. Christ Pantokrator, bloodstone, 4.6 cm high, late twelfth century
Geneva, Private Collection of George Ortiz
Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era 843-1261* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1997), 175, no. 127.

123. St John the Theologian, bloodstone, 3.6 cm high, late twelfth century
Kassel, Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel, no. B XVI, Tab. B-II-25
Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 90, no. 85.

124. St. Theodore, bloodstone, 2.9 cm high, late twelfth century
Kassel, Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel, no. B XVI, Tab. B-II-15
Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 90-91, no. 86.

125. The Prophet Daniel, bloodstone, 2.4 cm high, late twelfth century
Venice, Correr Museum, no. CL. XXXI A. n. 0089
Wentzel, "Kameen," 922.

126. The Virgin Enthroned, St. Pantaleimon (double-sided), bloodstone, 4.5 cm high, late twelfth century
Athens, Kanellopoulos Museum, no. Π. 512
N. Chatzidakis and C. Scampavias, eds., *The Paul and Alexandra Canellopoulos Museum, Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* (Athens: *The Paul and Alexandra Canellopoulos* Foundation, 2007), 97 no. 90.

127. Virgin Hagiosoritissa, amethyst, late twelfth century
Mt. Athos, Vatopedi Monastery
Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 70-71, no. 20.

128. Virgin Hodegetria, bloodstone, 3.77 cm high, twelfth century
London, British Museum, no. 1869,0712.3
Dalton, *Catalogue of the Engraved Gems of the Post-Classical Periods in the Department of British and Mediaeval Antiquities,* 3, no. 12.

129. The Archangel Michael and St. Demetrios, bloodstone, 2 cm high, late twelfth century
Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery, no. 42.6
Miner, *Early Christian and Byzantine Art,* 114, no. 556.

130. St. George, bloodstone, 4.1 cm high, late twelfth century
London, British Museum, no. 19,161,108.10
Buckton, *Byzantium: Treasures of Byzantine Art and Culture in British Collections,* 159, no. 173.

131. St. George, bloodstone, late twelfth century
Kiev, Khanenko Museum
Ljubica Popovich, "An examination of the Chilandar cameos," *Hilandarski zbornik* 5 (1983): 40, no. 36.

132. St. Theodore Tiron and St. Theodore Stratelates, bloodstone, 3.2 cm high, late twelfth century
Kiev, Kiev State Historical Museum, no. 1326
W. Putzko, "Die zweiseitige Kamee in der Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore," in *Beiträge zur Kunst des Mittelalters: Festschrift für Hans Wentzel zum 60. Geburtstag,* ed. R. Becksmann, U. D. Korn, and J. Zahlten (Berlin, Gebr. Mann, 1975), 177-179, no. 4 a, b.

133. John the Baptist, St. Theodore (double-sided), bloodstone, 3 cm high, thirteenth century
Stuttgart, Stuttgart Landesmuseum Württemberg, no. WLM 1967-162
Wentzel, "Kameen," 920.

134. Virgin Enthroned, blue chalcedony, 3.8 cm high, early twelfth century
New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, no. 2007.9
James David Draper, "Cameo Appearances," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, 65 no. 4 (Spring, 2008), 18, no. 28.

135. St. Irene, garnet, 2 cm high, twelfth century
Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery, no. 42.1436
Jewelry: Ancient to Modern (New York: Viking Press, 1980), 162.

136. John the Baptist, sardonyx, 1.9 cm high, twelfth century
St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, no. ш-397
Bank, "Vier byzantinisierende Kameen aus der Ermitage," 11-12, no. 1.

137. John the Baptist, sardonyx, 2.6 cm high, twelfth or thirteenth century
Vatican City, Vatican Museum, no. Vat. 819
Wentzel "Mittelalterliche Gemmen in den Sammlungen Italiens" 271, no. 819.

138. John the Baptist, sardonyx, 2.2 cm high, twelfth or thirteenth century
London, British Museum, no. OA. 5851
Dalton, *Catalogue of the Engraved Gems of the Post-Classical Periods in the Department of British and Mediaeval Antiquities,* 2, no. 7.

139. Christ Standing, sardonyx, 6.6 cm high, twelfth or thirteenth century
Prague, St. Vitus Treasury
Bauer, "The Reliquary Coronation Cross from the St. Vitus Treasury," 2; Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen, Versuch einer Grundlegung," 82, no. 59.

140. Crucifixion, sardonyx, 5.5 cm high, twelfth or thirteenth century
Prague, St. Vitus Treasury
Bauer, "The Reliquary Coronation Cross from the St. Vitus Treasury," 1.

141. Christ Blessing St. Theodore Tiron and St. Theodore Stratelates, jasper, date unknown
Mt. Athos, precise location unknown
Alisa V. Bank, *Prikladnoe Iskusstvo Vizantii Ix Xii Vv*. *Ocherki* (Moskva: Nauka, 1978)*,* 135.

142. Christ Blessing St. George and St. Demetrios, sardonyx, 4.9 cm high, twelfth century
Paris, Cabinet des Médailles, no. Babelon 342
Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 282-283, no. 193.

143. Virgin Orant, amethyst, 3 cm high, twelfth century
United Kingdom, Private Collection of David Talbot Rice
Rice, *Masterpieces of Byzantine Art: Catalogue of Exhibits,* 62, no. 184.

144. Crucifixion, Virgin and St. Niketas, bloodstone, 3.5 cm high, twelfth century
Vatican City, Vatican Museums
Wentzel "Mittelalterliche Gemmen in den Sammlungen Italiens," 271.

145. Crucifixion, bloodstone, twelfth century
Venice, Treasury of San Marco, no. 62 (in the Reliquary of the Holy Blood)
Marvin Ross, "Three Byzantine Cameos," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 3.1 (1990): 44-45, no. 3; Charles Davis, *Byzantine Relief Icons in Venice and Along the Adriatic Coast: Orants and Other Images of the Mother of God* (Munich: fondamentaARTE, 2006), plate 27; Andreas Rhoby, "Byzantinische Epigramme auf Ikonen und Objekten der Kleinkunst," in *Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung*, eds. Wolfram Hörandner, Anneliese Paul, and Andreas Rhoby (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2009), 257-258, no. Me83.

146. Crucifixion, lapis lazuli, 4.2 cm high, eleventh or twelfth century
Venice, Treasury of San Marco, no. 2
David Buckton, ed., *The Treasury of San Marco, Venice* (Milan: Olivetti, 1984), 258-262, no. 36.

147. Crucifixion, sapphire, 4.2 cm, twelfth century
Moscow, The Moscow Kremlin Museums, no. ДК-129.
Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 224-225, no. 36.

148. Koimesis, chrysoprase, 3.5 cm high x 4.6 cm wide, thirteenth or fourteenth century
Moscow, The Moscow Kremlin Museums, no. 52 oxp
Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 125, no. 646; Sterlgova, *Byzantine Antiquities*, 236-238, no. 41.

149. Transfiguration, bloodstone, 6.6 cm high, twelfth century
Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, no. ANSA IXa 5
Eichler and Kris, *Die Kameen im Kunsthistorischen Museum,* 97, no. 135.

150. Transfiguration, sardonyx, 7 cm high, thirteenth century
Moscow, The Moscow Kremlin Museums, no. ДК-1622

Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 228-230, no. 28.

151. Christ Standing, chalcedony, 2.3 cm high, thirteenth century
Moscow, Novo Diechi Convent, no. 2887/76
Darkevich, *Svetskoe iskusstvo Vizantii,* 287-288, no. 409.

152. Christ Standing, chalcedony, 2.7 cm high, thirteenth century
Novgorod, Novgorod Historical Architectural Museum, no. 1615
Darkevich, *Svetskoe iskusstvo Vizantii,* 291-292, no. 415.

153. Christ Standing, lapis lazuli, 4.5 cm high, twelfth or thirteenth century
Mt. Athos, Chilandar Monastery
Popovich, "An examination of the Chilandar cameos," 8-13, no. 1.

154. Christ Standing, agate, 1.8 cm high, eleventh or twelfth century
Moscow, Moscow State Historical Museum, no. 74034
Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 123, no. 637.

155. Virgin Orant, bloodstone, 2.5 cm high, twelfth century
Lyon, Musée des Beaux Arts, no. H. 2185
Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 285, no. 197.

156. Virgin Hagiosoritissa, bloodstone, eleventh or twelfth century
Sergiev Posad, The Sergiev-Posad Museum Preserve, (set into the Panagia of Archbishop Platon)
"Jewelry – Art of the 18th-19th Centuries," *The Sergiev Posad Museum Preserve,* (accessed February 11, 2013), http://www.musobl.divo.ru/Ecoll_goldN.html

157. Daniel between the lions, green jasper, twelfth or thirteenth century
Formerly in the Cathedral of the Dormition in Moscow (now lost)
Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 38.

158. Daniel between the lions, red jasper, 3 cm high, twelfth or thirteenth century
Athens, Benaki Museum, no. 13520
Williamson, "Daniel between the lions," 38, no. 3.

159. The Prophet Daniel, bloodstone, 2.9 cm high, twelfth century
Paris, Cabinet des Médailles, no. Babelon 340
Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 348, no. 330.

160. Virgin Orant, bloodstone, 3.4 cm high, twelfth century
London, British Museum, no. 18,690,712.20
Dalton, *Catalogue of the Engraved Gems of the Post-Classical Periods in the Department of British and Mediaeval Antiquities,* 3, no. 11.

161. Virgin Orant, bloodstone, 3.9 cm high, thirteenth century
Paris, Cabinet des Médailles, no. Schl. 29

Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 285, no. 196.

162. Virgin Hagiosoritissa, green quartz, 3.1 cm high, thirteenth century
Washington, D.C., Dumbarton Oaks, no. BZ.1946.6.
Asen, Carder, and Nelson, *Sacred Art, Secular Context,* 60, no. 5.

163. Virgin Blachernitissa, bloodstone, 3.9 cm high, early twelfth century
Moscow, Tretyakov Gallery, no. 12658
Natalia Teteriatnikov, "The Image of the Virgin Zoodochos Pege: two questions concerning its origin," in *Images of the Mother of God: Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium,* ed. Maria Vasilake (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 236, no. 19.5.

164. Virgin Orant, bloodstone, 4 cm high, thirteenth century
Mt. Athos, Chilandar Monastery
Popovich, "An examination of the Chilandar cameos," 22-28, no. 23.

165. Virgin Blachernitissa, green jasper, twelfth or thirteenth century
Mt. Athos, Chilandar Monastery
Popovich, "An examination of the Chilandar cameos," 19-22, no. 18.

166. Virgin Orant, lapis lazuli, twelfth century
Pskov, Pskov State Historical, Architectural, and Art Museum Reserve, no. 211
Pucko, "Neskol'ko vizantijskich kamej iz drevnerusskich gorodov," no. 8; S. V. Iamschikov, *Pskov: Art Treasures and Architectural Monuments, 12th-17th centuries* (St. Petersburg: Aurora Art Publishers, 1978), no. 41.

167. Virgin Orant, nephrite, thirteenth century
St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, from the Lemmlein Collection
Bank, *Prikladnoe Iskusstvo Vizantii,* 125, no. 111.

168. Virgin Orant, bloodstone, 2 cm high, thirteenth century
Lyon, Musée des Beaux Arts, no. A. 1570
Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 285, no. 198.

169. Virgin Orant, green jasper, thirteenth century
Rostov, State Museum Preserve Rostov Kremlin
Popovich, "An examination of the Chilandar cameos," 25, no. 25.

170. Virgin Orant, green jasper, 2.8 cm high, thirteenth century
Pskov, Pskov State Historical, Architectural, and Art Museum Reserve, no. 263
Pucko, "Neskol'ko vizantijskich kamej iz drevnerusskich gorodov," 125, no.9; S. V. Iamschikov, *Pskov: Art Treasures and Architectural Monuments, 12th-17th centuries* (St. Petersburg: Aurora Art Publishers, 1978), no. 49.

171. St. John the Theologian, red jasper, 3.4 cm high, thirteenth century
Paris, Cabinet des Médailles, Babelon 341

Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 287, no. 203.

172. Christ Pantokrator, bloodstone, 4 cm high, thirteenth century
Belgrade, Belgrade Museum of Applied Arts, no.4588
Cormack and Maria Vasilakē, *Byzantium, 330-1453,* 230, no. 202.

173. Christ Pantokrator, bloodstone, 2.24 cm high, twelfth or thirteenth century
Mt. Athos, Chilandar Monastery
Popovich, "An examination of the Chilandar cameos," 13-18, no. 8.

174. Christ Pantokrator, red jasper, 4.5 cm high, thirteenth century
Mt. Athos, Chilandar Monastery,
Popovich, "An examination of the Chilandar cameos," 18-19, no. 17.

175. Christ Pantokrator, red jasper, 3.5 cm high, thirteenth century
Novgorod, Novgorod Historical Architectural Museum, no. 629
Darkevich, *Svetskoe iskusstvo Vizantii,* 291, no. 133.

176. Christ Pantokrator, bloodstone, 4.2 cm, date unknown
Private collection Prälat Hoster, Cologne, (Formerly in the Vollmoeller Collection in Zürich)
Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 94n17.

177. Anastasis, red jasper, 6.2 cm high, eleventh century
Moscow, Moscow State Historical Museum, no. 53151/73
Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 2, 125, no. 645.

178. The Archangel Michael, bloodstone, 5 cm high, thirteenth century
Moscow, The Moscow Kremlin Museums, no. TK-2290
Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities*, 234-235, no. 40.

179. The Archangel Michael, St. Paul and St. John the Theologian, bloodstone, 5.8 cm high, fourteenth or fifteenth century
Mt. Athos, Vatopedi Monastery
Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Pitarakis, *Enkolpia,* 118-119, no. 40.

180. St. Demetrios, chrysoprase, 1.7 cm high, fourteenth or fifteenth century
Solms-Laubach, Private Collection, (Previously in the Cloister of Arnsburg)
Wentzel, "Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel," 94n17; J. H. Deckert, R. Freyhan, and K. Steinbart, *Religiöse Kunst aus Hessen und Nassau: kritischer Gesamtkatalog der Ausstellung Marburg 1928* (Marburg-Lahn: Verlag des Kunstgeschichtlichen Seminars, 1932), 135, no. 154, table 239 a.

181. St. George, nephrite, 2.2 cm high, fourteenth or fifteenth century
Vladimir, The Vladimir and Suzdal Museum of History, Art, and Architecture, no. B-1689
Pucko, "Neskol'ko vizantijskich kamej iz drevnerusskich gorodov," 131, no. 13.

182. John the Theologian, green jasper? fourteenth or fifteenth century
Mt. Athos, Chilandar Monastery
Popovich, “An examination of the Chilandar cameos,” 28-34, no. 28.

183. St. John the Theologian, chrysoprase, 2 cm high, fourteenth or fifteenth century
Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, no. ANSA XII 391
Eichler and Kris, *Die Kameen im Kunsthistorischen Museum,* 98, no. 138.

184. St. Nicholas, nephrite, 6 cm high, fourteenth or fifteenth century
Moscow, The Moscow Kremlin Museums, no. ДК-756
Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities*, 239-240, no. 42.

185. St. Peter and St. Paul, jasper, 1.7 cm high x 2 cm wide, thirteenth or fourteenth centuries
St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, no. ш-363
Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 3, 162, no. 1018.

186. St. John the Theologian, green jasper, fourteenth or fifteenth century
Formerly in the Sacristy of the Patriarch in Moscow (now lost)
du Mély, "Le trésor de la Sacristie des patriarches de Moscou," 208-209, no. 4.

187. St. Theodore, bloodstone, 3.7 cm high, fourteenth or fifteenth century
Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, no. ANSA IXa 17
Eichler and Kris, *Die Kameen im Kunsthistorischen Museum,* 97, no. 136.

188. The Prophet Daniel, bloodstone, fourteenth or fifteenth century
Sergiev Posad, Trinity Sergius Monastery, no. 909/510/65
P. Jurgenson, “Zur Frage des Charakters der byzantinischen Plastik während der palaiologenzeit,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 29 (1929): 271-272; Il′in, *Zagorsk: Trinity Sergius Monastery,* 50, nos. 36 and 37.

189. Two Saints, green jasper, 2.3 cm high, fourteenth or fifteenth century
Vatican City, Vatican Museum, no. Vat. 805
Wentzel “Mittelalterliche Gemmen in den Sammlungen Italiens” 271, table B, no. 11.

190. The Archangel Michael, nephrite, 2.7 cm high, fourteenth or fifteenth century
Moscow, The Moscow Kremlin Museums, no. ДК-137
Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 244-245, no. 45.

191. The Archangel Michael, nephrite, 2.7 cm high, fourteenth or fifteenth century
Vladimir, The Vladimir and Suzdal Museum of History, Art, and Architecture, no. B-1690
Pucko, “Neskol'ko vizantijskich kamej iz drevnerusskich gorodov,” 135, no. 15; Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities*, 244-245.

192. The Archangel Michael, nephrite, 4 cm high, fourteenth or fifteenth century
Vladimir, The Vladimir and Suzdal Museum of History, Art, and Architecture, no. CM-1501

Pucko, “Neskol'ko vizantijskich kamej iz drevnerusskich gorodov,” no. 14; Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities*, 244-245.

193. Christ Blessing St. George and St. Demetrios, green jasper, 4.5 cm high, fourteenth or fifteenth centuries
Moscow, The Moscow Kremlin Museums, no. 629 соб
Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 3, 162 no. 1017; Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities,* 241-242, no. 43.

194. St. Theodore, sardonyx, 2.8 cm high, fourteenth or fifteenth century
Paris, Cabinet des Médailles, no. Schl. 287
Guillou and Durand, *Byzance,* 438, no. 329.

195. Christ Standing, sardonyx, 3.6 cm high, fourteenth or fifteenth century
Houlton, Maine, The Content Family Collection
Henig, *The Content family collection of ancient cameos*, 121, no. 193.

196. St. John the Baptist, sardonyx, 2.1 cm high, fourteenth or fifteenth century
Kassel, Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel, no. B XVI, Tab. B-II-25
Wentzel, “Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel,” 92-93, no. 84.

197. Christ Emmanuel, sardonyx, 2.3 cm high, fourteenth or fifteenth century
Kassel, Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel, no. B XVI, Tab. B-II-22
Wentzel, “Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel,” 92-93, no. 79.

198. The Prophet Daniel, sardonyx, 2.1 cm high, fourteenth or fifteenth century
Kassel, Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel, no. B XVI, Tab. B-II-29
Wentzel, “Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel,” 92-93, no. 88.

199. Christ Pantokrator, sardonyx, 2.1 cm high, fourteenth or fifteenth century
Kassel, Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel, no. B XVI, Tab. B-II-14
Wentzel, “Die byzantinischen Kameen in Kassel,” 92-9, no. 81.

200. Christ Antiphonites, blue chalcedony, 3 cm high, fourteenth or fifteenth century
Moscow, The Moscow Kremlin Museums, no. MP-698/1-2.
Sterligova, *Byzantine Antiquities*, 243, no. 44.

List of Comparative Works

C1. Portrait of Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II enthroned
Sardonyx, early thirteenth century (dated by Hans Wentzel)
Prague, St. Vitus Treasury at Prague Castle
Image from Hans Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen, Versuch einer Grundlegung," *Zeitschrift des deutschen Vereins für Kunstwissenschaft* 8 (1941): 76, no. 48.

C2. St. Anne,
Agate, around 1200 CE (dated by Hans Wentzel)
Modena, Muzeo Nazionale
Image from Hans Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen in den Sammlungen Italiens," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 7 (1956): 243, no. 5.

C3. King Jehu
Sardonyx, thirteenth or fourteenth century (dated by Rainer Kahsnitz)
St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum
Image from Rainer Kahsnitz, "Staufische Kameen" in *Die Zeit der Staufer: Geschichte, Kunst, Kultur: Katalog der Ausstellung (Stuttgart, Altes Schloss und Kunstgebäude, 26. März-5. Juni 1977),* vol. 5, ed. Reiner Hausscher (Stuttgart: Württembergisches Landesmuseum, 1977), 511, no. 388.

C4. St. George
Sardonyx, thirteenth century (dated by Hans Wentzel)
Windsor, U.K., Windsor Castle
Image from Hans Wentzel, "Die Kamee mit dem hl. Georg im Schloss zu Windsor," in *Festschrift Friedrich Gerke: Kunsthistorische Studien,* ed. J.A. Schmoll gen. Eisenwerth (Baden-Baden: Holle-Verlag, 1962), 103, no. 1.

C5. Three Saints
Sardonyx, thirteenth century (dated by Alisa Bank)
St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, no. ш-365
Image from A. V. Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii v sobraniiakh SSSR: Katalog vystavki,* vol. 3 (Moscow: Sov. khudozhnik, 1977)*,* 37, no. 920.

C6. Archangel Michael
Sardonyx, twelfth or thirteenth century (dated by Alisa Bank)
St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, no. ш-370
Image from Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 3, 36, no. 917

C7. Daniel between the lions
Sardonyx, thirteenth century? (dated by Hans Wentzel)
Munich, Staatliches Münzsammlung, no. 173
Image from Hans Wentzel, "Die Mittelalterlichen Gemmen der Staatlichen Münzsammlung zu München," *Münchner Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst* 8 (1957): 52, no. 15.

C8. The Archangel Michael
Sardonyx, twelfth or thirteenth century? (dated by Hans Wentzel)
Munich, Staatliches Münzsammlung, no. 176.
Image from Wentzel, "Die Mittelalterlichen Gemmen der Staatlichen Münzsammlung zu München," 53, no. 18

C9. Virgin Orant
Agate, twelfth or thirteenth century (dated by Alisa Bank)
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Image from Bank, *Iskusstvo Vizantii,* vol. 3, no. 36.

C10. Christ Standing
Sardonyx, late thirteenth century (dated by Wentzel)
Stockholm, Swedish History Museum
Image from Wentzel, "Mittelalterliche Gemmen, Versuch einer Grundlegung," 64, no. 23.

C11. Transfiguration
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St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum

C12. The Archangel Michael
Sardonyx, thirteenth century (dated by Jannic Durand)
Paris, Louvre Museum, no. MS 91 (mounted in the Crown of Napoleon)
Image from André Guillou and Jannic Durand, *Byzance et les images: cycle de conférences organisé au musée du Louvre par le Service culturel du 5 octobre au 7 décembre 1992* (Paris: La Documentation française, 1994), 288, no. 204.

C13. Lead seal of the Prophet Daniel
Eleventh or twelfth century (dated by Alisa Bank)
St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, M-8191
Image from A. V. Bank, *Byzantine Art in the Collection of Soviet Museums* (St. Petersburg: Aurora Art Publishers, 1978), no. 171.

C14. Icon of the Virgin
Marble, eleventh century
Istanbul, Istanbul Archeological Museum, no. 9814 T
Image from Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: a History of the Image before the Era of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 187 no. 108.

C15. *Enkolpion* of Daniel, St. Ncholas, and St. Basil
Steatite
Mt. Athos, Vatopedi Monastery
Image from G G. Oikonomakē-Papadopoulou, Katia Loverdou-Tsigarida, and Brigitte Pitarakis, *Enkolpia: the Holy and Great Monastery of Vatopaidi* (Mount Athos: Holy and Great Monastery of Vatopaidi, 2001), 86, no. 27.

C16. *Enkolpion* of Daniel, the Archangel Michael, and two military saints
Steatite, thirteenth century (dated by Ioli Kalavrezou)
Vatican City, Vatican Museum, no. 1132

C17. Contuli codicem Vindobonensem phil. gr. 108 V, f. 363
Image from Armand Delatte, ed., *Anecdota atheniensia* (Liége: Imp. H. Vaillant-Carmanne, 1927), 499.

C18. Daniel's Vision of the Rock Cut from the Mountain
Bristol Psalter (British Library Add. 40731), f 105v
early eleventh century

C19. Icon of the Virgin Hagiosoritissa
Marble, eleventh or twelfth century
Washington, DC, Dumbarton Oaks
Image after Sirarpie der Nersessian, "Two Images of the Virgin in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 14 (1960): no. 6.

C20. Icon of the Virgin Hodegetria
Steatite, twelfth century (dated by Ioli Kalavrezou)
Stuttgart, Württenbergisches Landesmuseum, no. 2001
Image after Kalavrezou, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite,* 122 no. 31.

C21. Medicinal amulet.
Obverse: the image of Christ and the Woman with the issue of the Blood.
Reverse: The Virgin Orant
Bloodstone, Sixth/Seventh Century or Tenth Century
New York, The Metropolitan Museum, no. 17.190.491